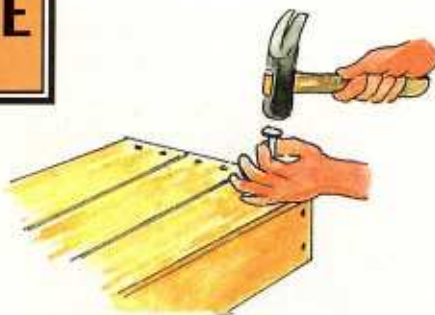


HAKO-ZU-KE (Box Snare)

Set up "BOX SNARE"
in the evening.

The box is the used
fish or apple package
(I could take it from a
neighboring general
store).



You need
reinforcement by
driving nails.



Set up the snare the place
where no one set up.

Baits are the same as
"OKETSUKE".

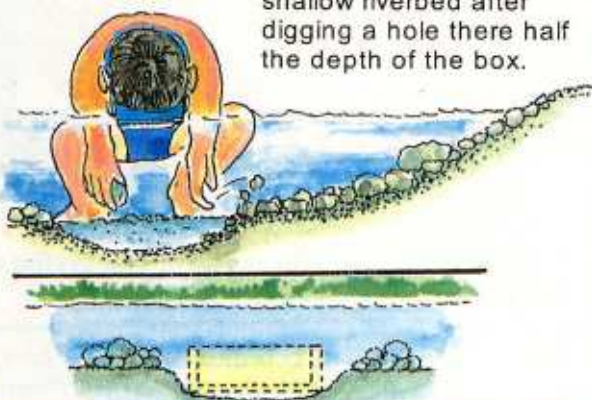
a rubber band



Make
some
holes in
the vinyl
bag.



Set up the snare in a
shallow riverbed after
digging a hole there half
the depth of the box.



The vinyl bag should be placed in the
center of the box and some stones
over it.



Keep it there one night.

At night, fishes
enter into
openings
between the
stones, invited
by the smell of
the baits.
Fishes remain
sitting there.



The next morning, take out some stones so that
you can raise up the box. Don't take all the stones out, or
the fishes are going to escape.



When you carry the
box back to the
shore, don't raise it
above the water.
Keeping it in the
water (bottom picture)
allows you to carry it
easily because of the
Archimedes principal.
You had better get
your friend to help
when you carry the
box to the bank and
you should share the
fish with friends in the
case of a large catch.



I was always excited expecting a large
catch when I removed the stones from
the box. There were always Eels,
"SUBOGUCHI", etc.

YOBURE (Night Fishing)

"YOBURE" means night fishing in the river under the light of an acetylene torch, starting at around nine o'clock in the evening.

It was a great pleasure to go night fishing with my father, when we walked up the river, in the shallow water, two to three kilometers. We walked on the bank when the river became too deep. By gazing at the water you could easily find sleepy fish swimming inactively and also still fish on the bottom of the river, which you scooped out by net or speared by halberd.

I enjoyed the fun itself with my father at midnight, rather than the quantity of the catch.



It's convenient for the net (SADE) and the three points halberd (HOKO) to be attached to both sides of the same bamboo.



JAPANESE TOWEL
Bandage for emergency



BIKU A funnel-shaped fish container made of bamboo.



a **MATCH**
Never get them wet.

Carried Equipment

A condensing lens

The ignition hole

Acetylene gas is generated by chemical reaction between water and carbide.

CARBIDE
Sold at general shops.



WATER TANK

Water should always be full from the river.

Center rod controls the water drop.

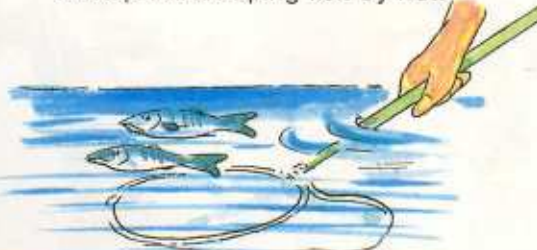
Fasten bolts tightly lest gas leaks.

* This picture was drawn only from memory and so this is not necessarily accurate.

Aim the target which is still on the bottom and spear it rapidly and powerfully.



Scoop the sleeping fish by net.



The full moon is not good for fishing and a dark night is best for a large catch.

MOGU-RI and HOKO-TSUKI

(Diving, Thrusting Fishes By Halberd)

I could dive and spear many kind of fish, which are Crucian, Carp, Catfish, Eels, YAMASO, Dace etc. It is not only the most enjoyable, but also profitable play for children.



How to make IPPON-HOKO (One halberd)

First, you should find a used rod, approximately 20-30 cm in length and of a pencil's diameter, such as an old window rail, iron chopstick, parts of a bicycle or something like that.



Burn it until it turn bright red on a portable clay cooking stove.

Beat and shape it roughly to the shape of HOKO (halberd) with a hammer.



Make a flat lump on the rod as seen in the picture.

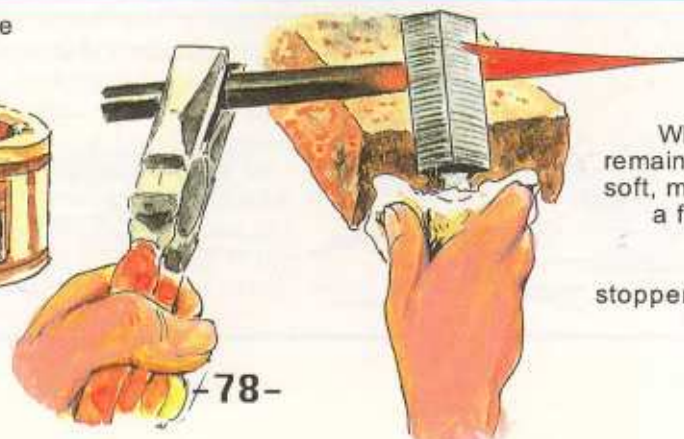


Make the spearhead keen edged gradually by beating and heating repeatedly.

File the spearhead.



Repeat the heating.



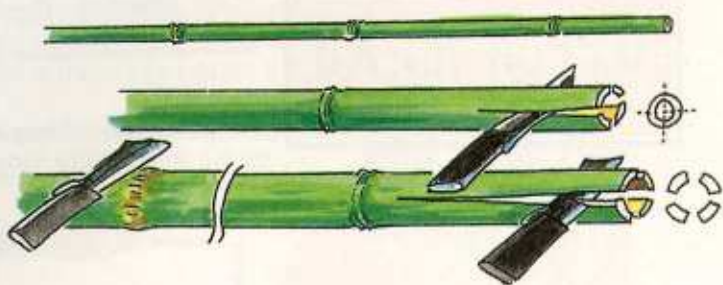
When it is hot and remains bright red and soft, make a hook with a file or a chisel as seen in picture. This hook is the stopper so as not to let the fish escape.

TO TEMPER

When you have finished forming it, you should harden the spearhead.



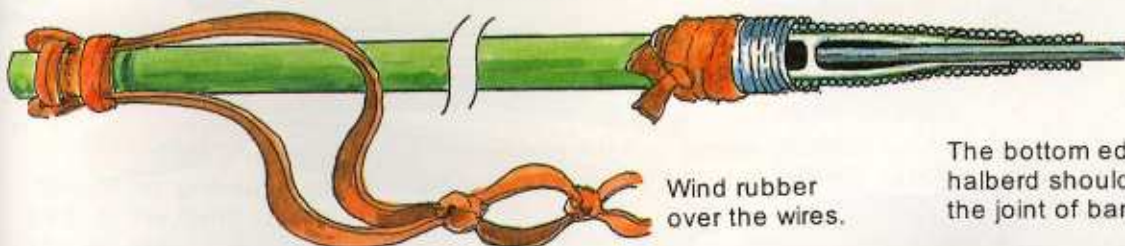
Hardening is cooling it into the water rapidly after heating it. The timing of cooling is delicate.



Every bamboo joint must be scraped clean and flat.



Insert HOKO, a halberd, to the bamboo and fasten tightly with wires.



Wind rubber over the wires.

The bottom edge of the halberd should be right inside the joint of bamboo.

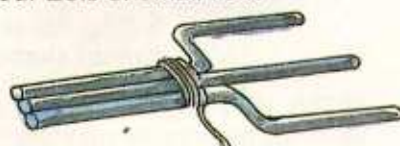
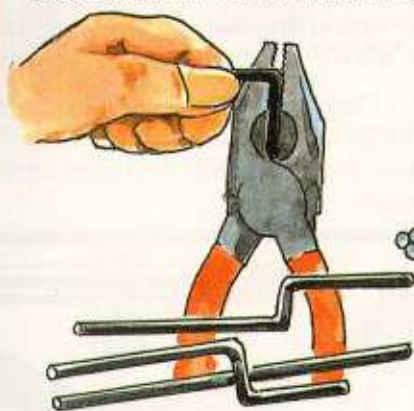
SAN-BON-HO-KO (Three Halberd Jointed)

HOW TO MAKE

Materials are narrow iron rods, such as the spokes of a disused bicycle or needles of "SENBAKOKI", a conventional threshing machine.

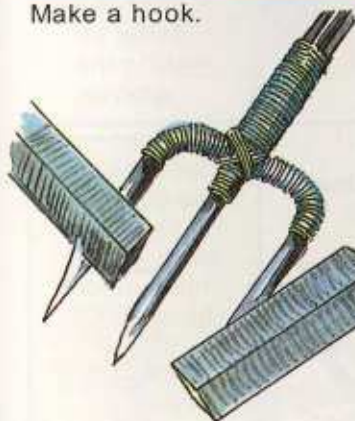
Bend them, as seen in the picture, using a plier or vise. When you joint it to the bamboo, do the same method as with IPPON-HOKO mentioned above.

This SANBON-HOKO is used to spear Eels or small fish.



It is better to reinforce the joint of the three rods by soldering.

Make a hook.



Hardening is necessary, when the materials are soft iron. (See the picture of IPPON-HOKO.)



Make a keen edge to the spearhead with a file.

When you thrust in into a stone and the spearhead is crushed, it is necessary to harden and to make it keen edged again.

TEPPOH-HO-KO (Gun Halberd)

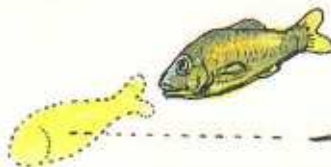


1 Pull the rod sliding to the grip and hook the trigger to the hole of the slide case.



2 When your forefinger touches the trigger, TEPPOH-HOKO, a gun halberd, is ready for shooting.

3 When you find a fish in the water, you should aim in front of the fish, estimating the direction it will go in.



4 After finishing aiming, pull the trigger, and shoot the fish. HOKO, the rod, is sliding in the case towards the fish.



5 The rod stop thrusts at the stopper on the edge of the case. You cannot shoot the fish without knowing your effective range and distance.

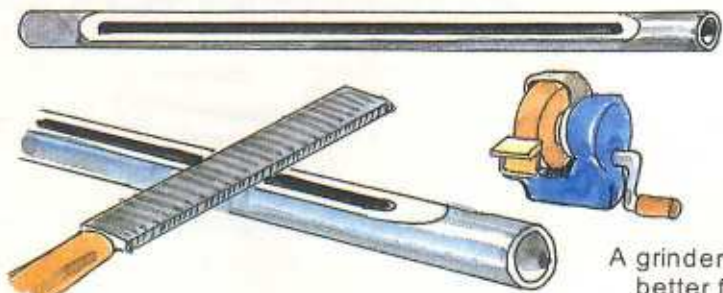
* This TEPPOH-HOKO, a gun halberd I had been investigating continually in my elementary school days, was almost all of my invention. I think that, probably, someone had produced the prototype, but that was my original one which nobody in my hometown had, also these types were fairly well spread to other children. But I feel confident that my TEPPOH-HOKO had a higher performance.

HOW TO MAKE

Cut an axis of disused umbrella, which is for the iron case.



Make the groove in which the trigger slides by filing patiently.



A grinder is better for making the groove.

Complete the edge of the groove round by filing so that the trigger in it can slide easily.



Complete it as seen in the picture.

As HOKO, the rod, is attached to a wooden grip by a nail, cut a cross line on the case so that the nail is able to penetrate the rod easily.



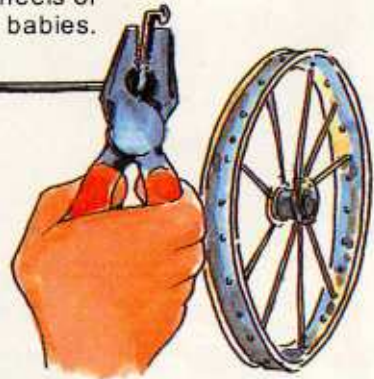
Make a hole in which the trigger is hooked.

The case can also be made of bamboo, which can be easily made but also be easily destroyed. And it sometimes was made of plastic water tube.

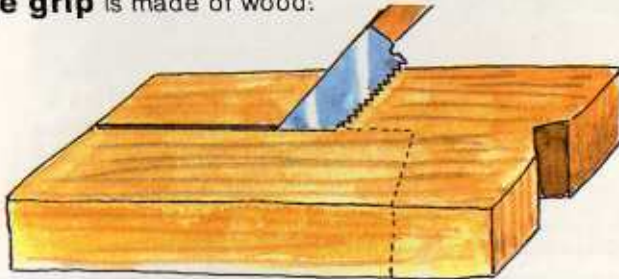


The shaft, HOKO, is made of the unused spoke of bicycle's wheels or frames of a mosquito net for babies.

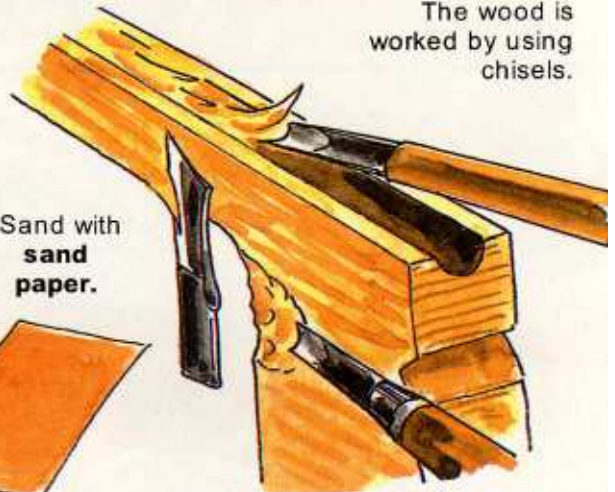
Make the keen edged spearhead and bend 2 cm at a 90 degrees angle on the other edge.



The grip is made of wood:

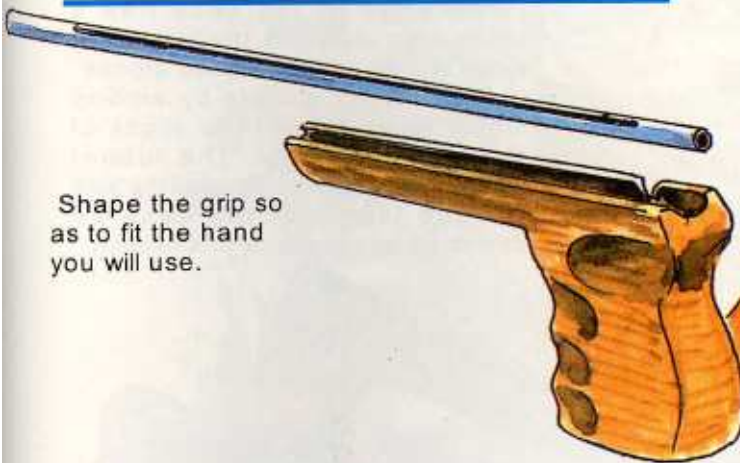


The wood is worked by using chisels.

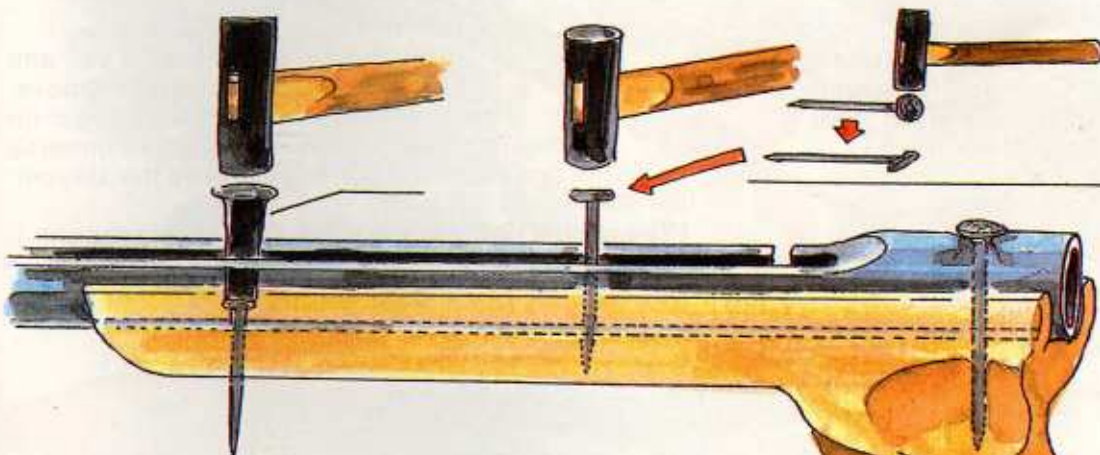


Sand with sand paper.

Shape the grip so as to fit the hand you will use.

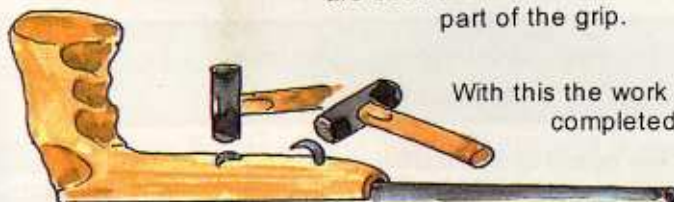


Hammer nails by using a wedge.

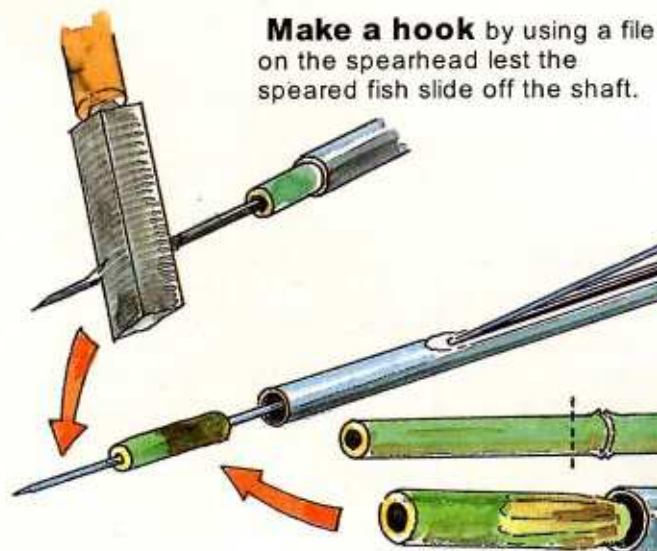


Nail heads should be narrower than the width of the groove carved in the case.

Hammer in the other nail to fix the case to the grip.
The penetrating tip of the nails are bent and driven into the lower part of the grip.

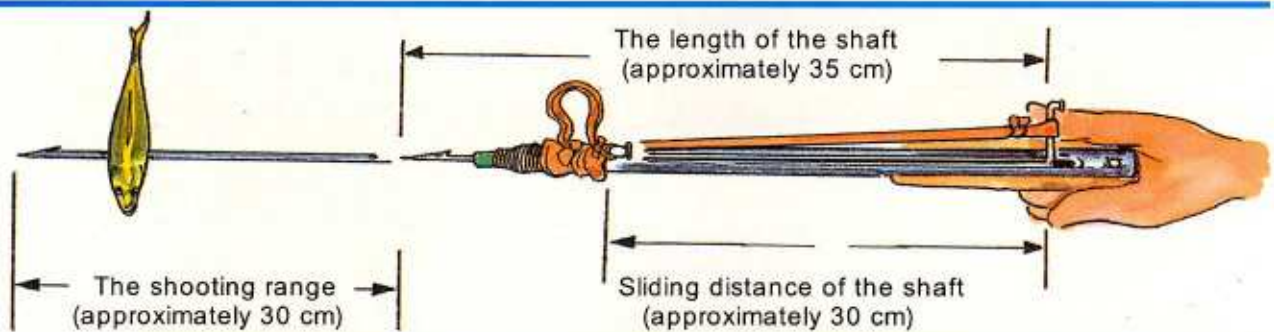
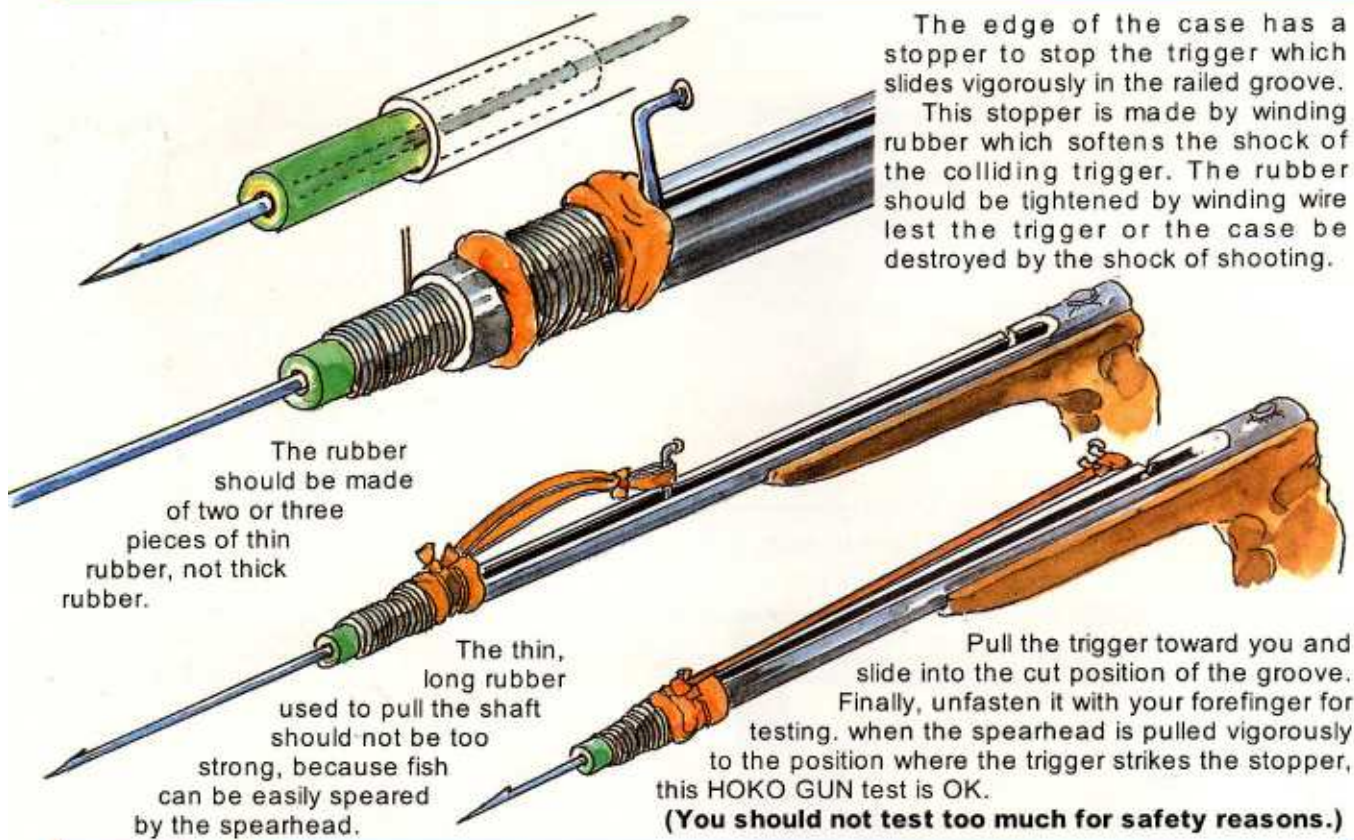


With this the work is roughly completed.



Put the shaft, HOKO, into the case.

Attach the bamboo, which has a diameter which is the same as the inside diameter of the case, to the spearhead position so that the shaft fits snugly in the case and smoothly slides toward the target.

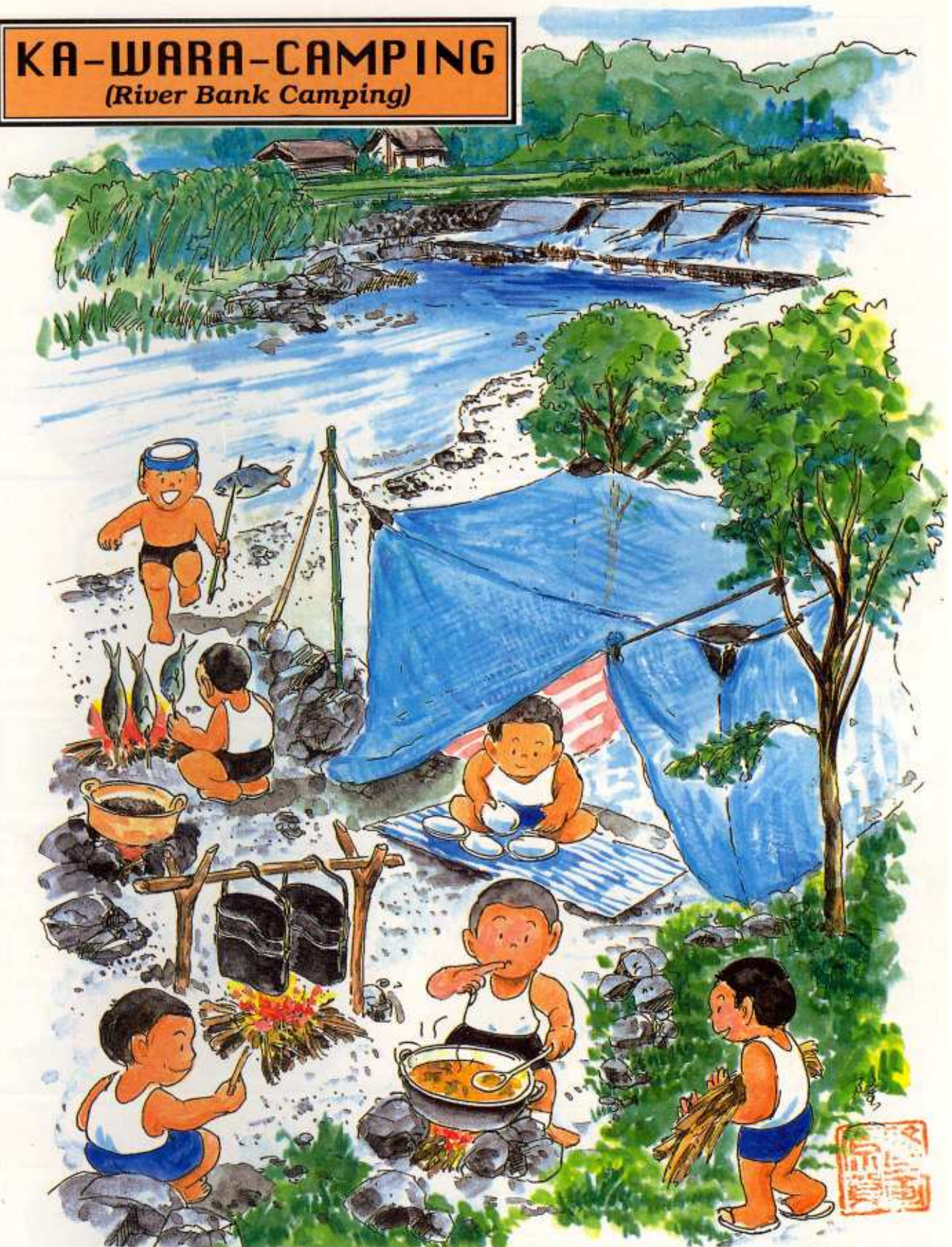


***Never leave the trigger in the setting-up position except when you seek and shoot fish in the water.**

You may think HOKO GUN is dangerous, but no one was injured by it in those days even though children competed to make better ones. This gun has a high accuracy bull's-eye rate, whether for big or small fish, even Eels. The number of fish caught was overwhelming compared to the normal IPPON-HOKO, being as much as 2-3 kg a day.

KA-WARA-CAMPING

(River Bank Camping)



We enjoyed camping at the river-side or field. The best part was cooking, so we also enjoyed day-time camping. Our tent was a mosquito net. Several children brought rice, soy-sauce, sugar, a rice-cooker pot or a small pan, etc.

Everyone had a role fishing with spear, cooking rice, making curry sauce, etc. It got quite dark when we finally started eating lively, and it was just the time for **a camp-fire**, too. ...And, time to sleep in **the mosquito net**.

Such exciting nights.

HANGOU-GOHAN (RICE-COOKER POT Cooking)



I found lots of springs coming out in the fields in those days, and that was a good place to rub and rinse rice.

We have a rice-cooker pot called HANGO for out-door cooking.

I often cooked rice for my parents busy with farming since I was the only child.

So I was a good cook at camp-sites.



Change the water a few times, taking care not to drop rice until the water runs clear.

You need quite a bit of experience to know the exact amount of water for rice.

(Some HANGOs have scales, but experience is most reliable.)



The basic rule of cooking is as in the following rhyme:
**at the start with a small fire,
in the middle with a vigorous fire,
and never open the lid even if a baby starts crying with hunger.**



Reduce the fire when the pot overflows and cook for 10 minutes.

Tap the upper part of the pot. The sound tells you whether it's ready or not.

Put the pot up-side down on the grass and let it steam for about 10 minutes.



Now, the delicious boiled rice is ready to eat!



TAKE-SU-I-HAN (BAMBOO-RICE-COOKER-POT Cooking)

Cut a big fresh bamboo with joints on both sides.

Pour in the needed amount of rice and water in the hole.



Make a hole.



Cooking.
Don't burn the bamboo-pot until the rice is cooked.

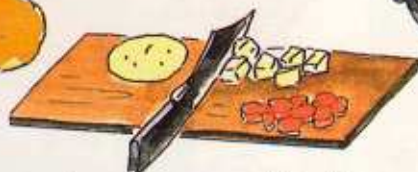
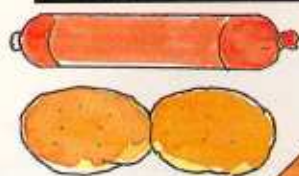


When you eat, split the bamboo.

The way to cook is almost the same as "HANGOO" cooking.

CURRY RICE

The most popular dish at camp-sites is curry rice.



Dice **potatoes** and **sausages**, and fry them with **margarine** or oil.
Stir them constantly so as not to stick to the frying pan.

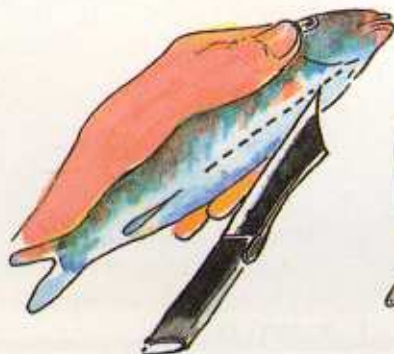


Add **water** and boil until the potatoes become **soft**. Scoop and remove lye while cooking.
Add ready-to-use curry paste (solid) and cook stirring over a gentle fire. It is ready to eat when the soup becomes thick.

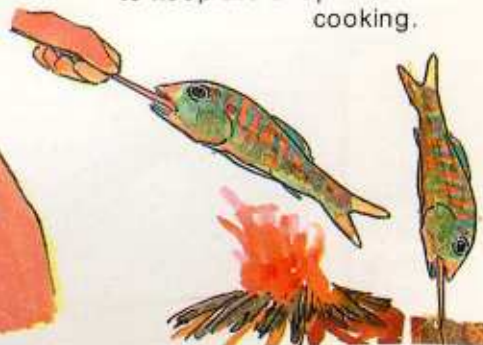
COOKING RIVER-FISH (NI-TSUKU)

Cut the belly of a fish and take out the guts.

Remove scales of the Crucian from tail to top with your thumb nail or knife.



Grill lightly the surface so as to keep the shape while cooking.



You can eat it as a grilled fish, adding some salt. It is very tasty.

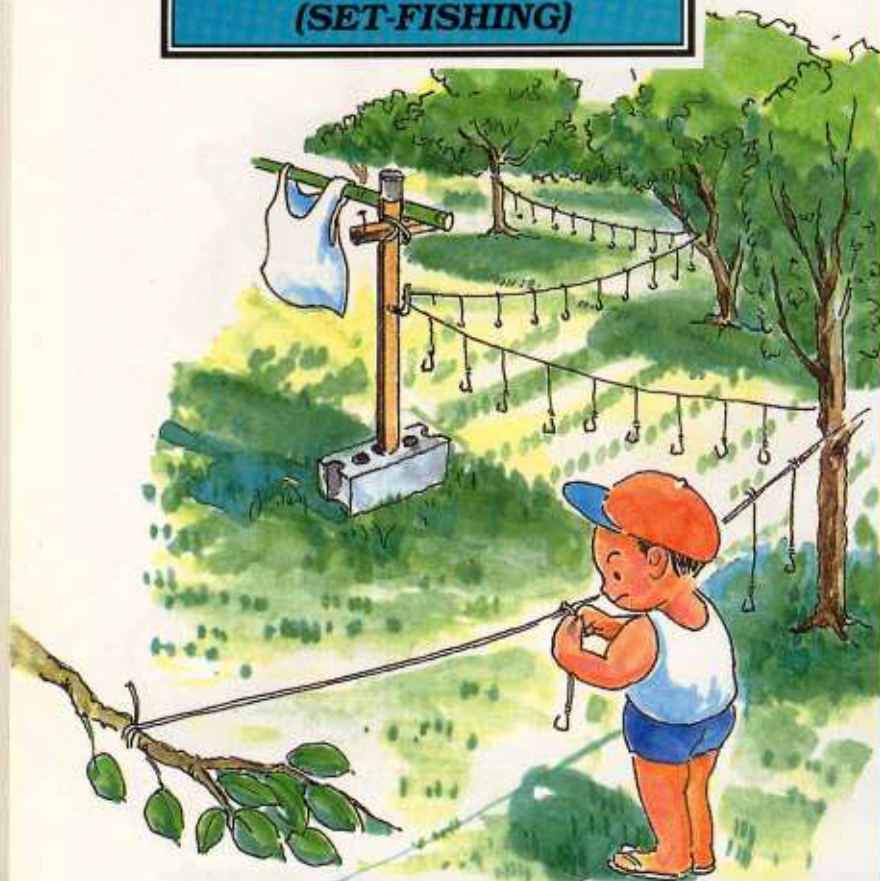
Add some **sugar** and **soy-sauce** to **water**.
(At home, I used to add some Rice-Wine "MI-RI-N".)

Cook fish in the broth over a gentle fire with an **inner lid-cover**.
Be careful not to let it scorch.

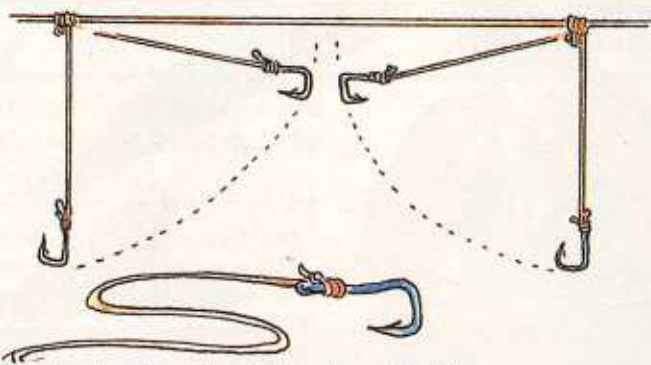
This stewed fish is so soft and delicious that you can eat the whole fish (even the head), and you ask for several helpings of rice.



TSU-KE-BA-RI (SET-FISHING)

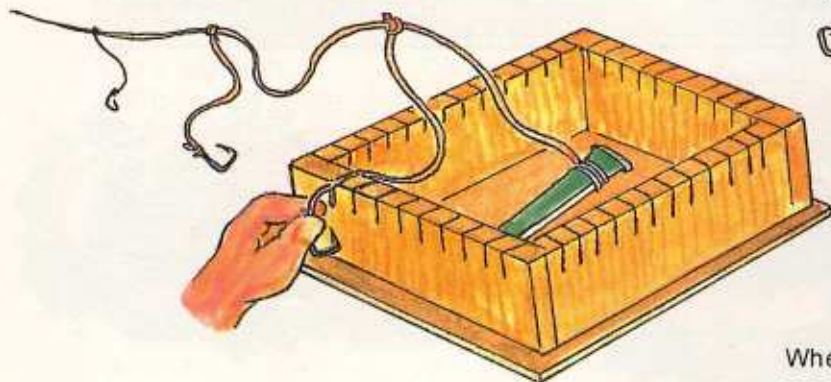


Extend around 100 meters of string (line) and tie hooks proportionately.



The hooks should not touch each other.

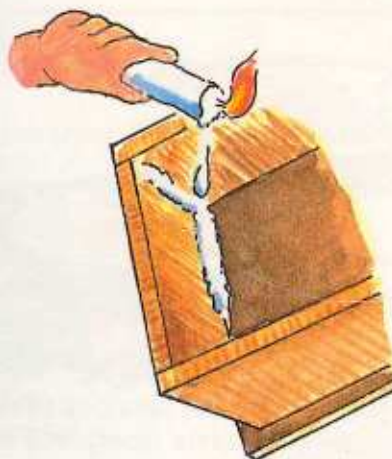
Tie bamboo sticks to both ends of the line.
Set hooks one by one in the notches in one direction.



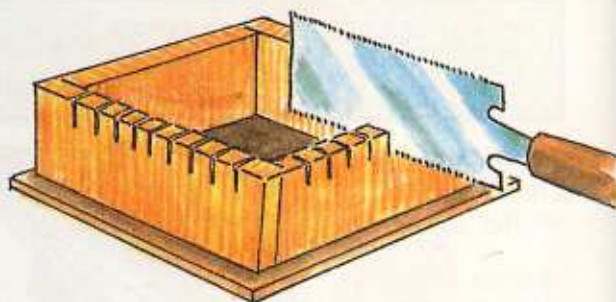
Exclusive use BOX.



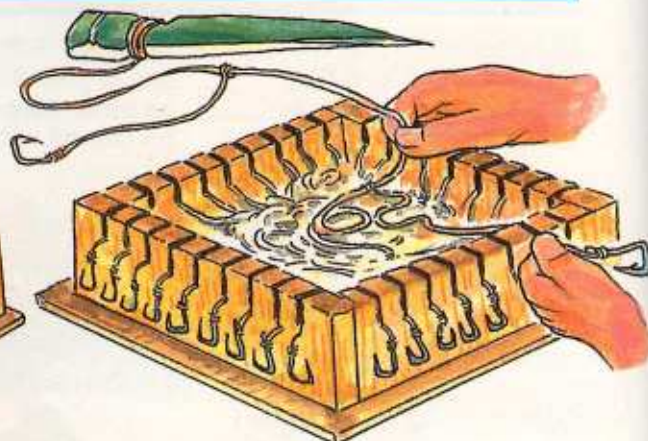
A hard wooden box is used to set the line.



Seal the gaps with melted candle to make it float on the river for hours.



Make notches with a saw.
(Pay attention to the direction of the grain, so as the piece between 2 notches doesn't fall off.)



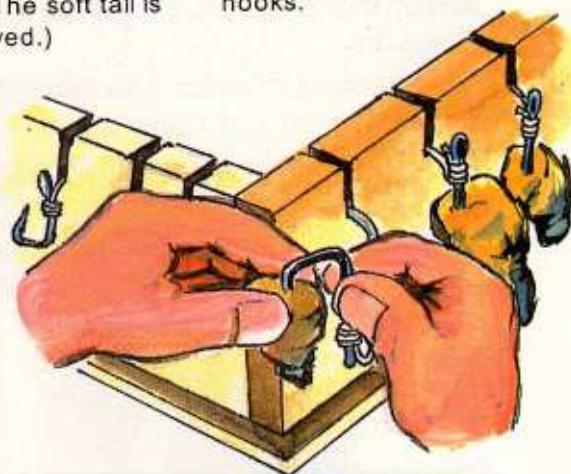
When setting in all the notches, set in the second round.

PREPARATIONS FOR FISHING

Collect pond mud snails for bait, as many as the hooks if possible.

Break shells and take out meat. (The soft tail is to be removed.)

Set snails to all the hooks.



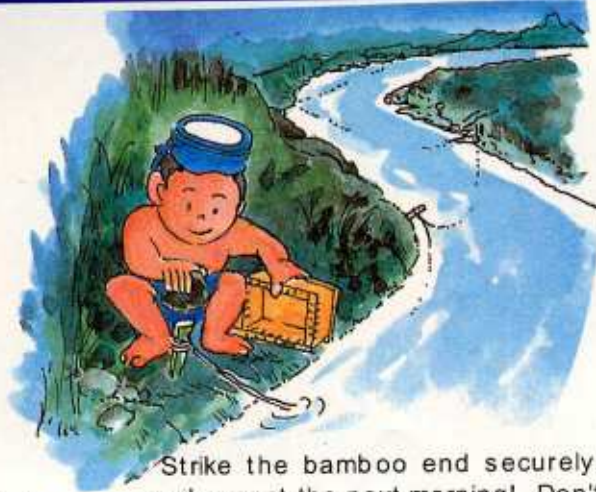
Late in the evening, the line of hooks is set off the river one by one from the last hook placed in the box.



Stand several bamboo sticks to keep the line apart.



Also place stones so it will not drift away or get entangled.



Strike the bamboo end securely, and expect the next morning! Don't forget the place you set the line.

Early in the next morning, around 5 o'clock, I hurried to the site.

The morning exercise with radio music started at 6:30 and I also had to finish delivering newspaper, so I rushed to the river as early as possible.

Even in mid-summer, the river water at 5 a.m. was quite chilly and it demanded determination to step in at first.

Once in water I didn't feel so cold. "What kind of fish are caught today?"

Expectation and excitement overwhelmed chills and everything else. Such a thrilling moment to pull up the line!



Keep the box afloat from setting the line till drawing in, so that the line doesn't get entangled within the box in the water.



Start drawing from the last hook and set hooks **again one by one** in order.

The hooks with fish are also set with **longer** line so as not to let the box sink with the weight of fish.

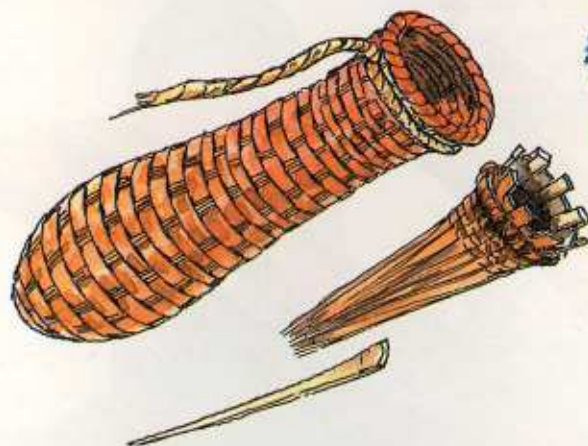


Set all the hooks on the box. Common fish were catfish, Gyu-gyu, and Crucian Carp.

After coming home, take off the fish and dry the line.

U-NA-GI-TE-BO (Eel-Trap Basket)

Elderly people used to make Eel-trap baskets out of bamboo. I couldn't make one, so I asked an old man to weave one for me.



The mouth of a basket is shaped like a funnel.

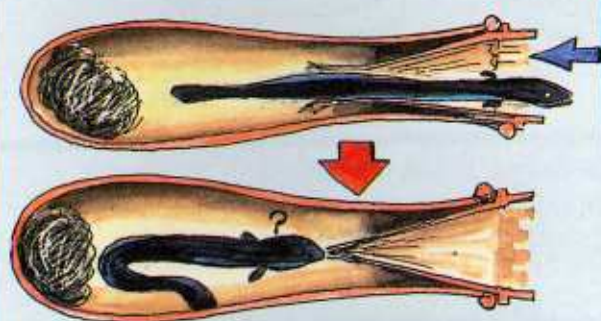


The bait is earthworm. Put the worm covered with hemp-palm into the bottom and cover the funnel-shaped lid to the mouth.

Late in the afternoon sink the baskets with stone weights in a rocky river. Leave them there overnight. Eels come into the baskets attracted by worms through the narrow entrance. They cannot get out after eating worms since the bamboo funnel is one-way.



When an Eel get into the hole, it goes tail first ! Then it can't get out because of the funnel.



Early in the next morning pull the baskets up.



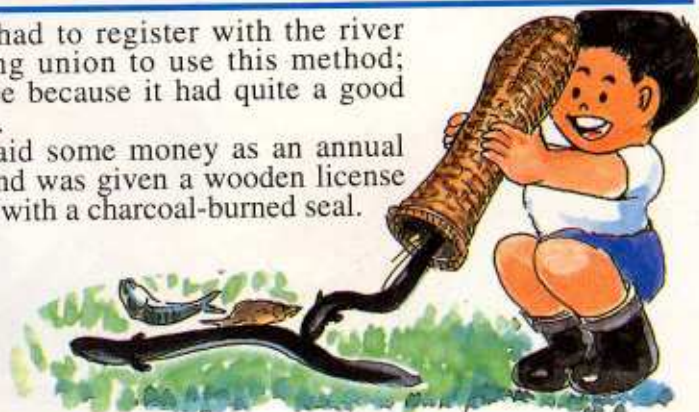
Take off the lids.



This tool generally brought in a good catch, and Crucian Carp and other fish could also be caught.

We had to register with the river fishing union to use this method; maybe because it had quite a good catch.

I paid some money as an annual fee and was given a wooden license plate with a charcoal-burned seal.



U-NA-GI-RYO-RI

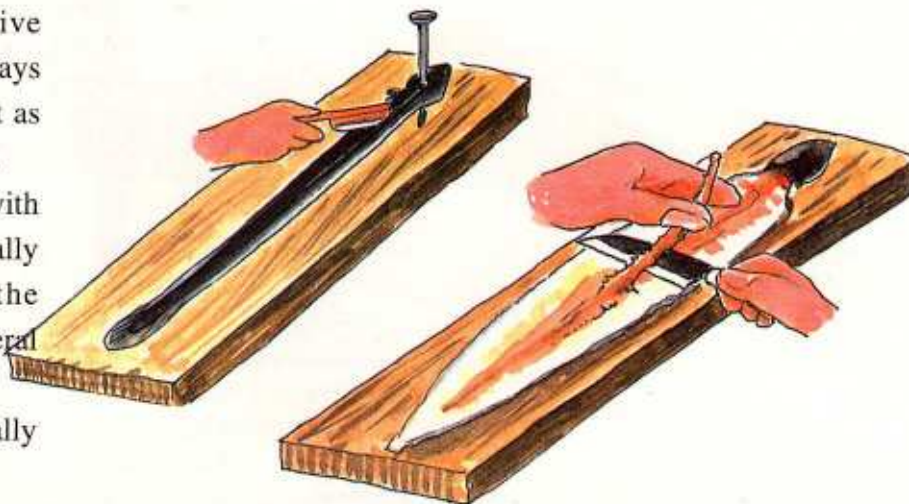
(Eel Cooking)

First pin the head of an Eel with a nail, and cut the back with a blade.

Eel seems to be an expensive food even today, and in those days it was a luxury since it was not as easy to catch like Crucian Carp.

I wrote as if I caught a lot with the line or the baskets, but actually the whole catch through the summer was 14 to 16 with several attempts.

So when I caught an Eel, I really enjoyed cooking it.

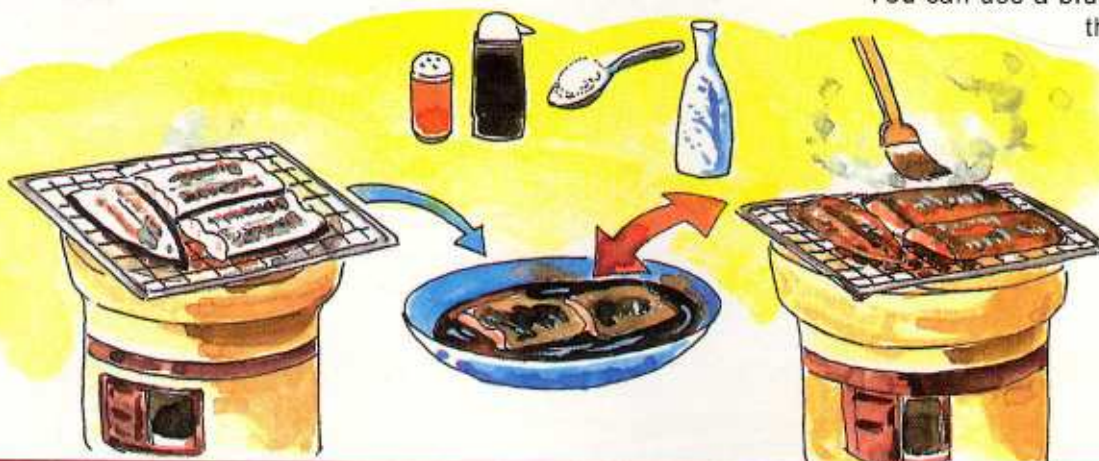


Take out the bones with a knife.

Cut it into a few pieces and broil them lightly over a charcoal fire.

Dip them in the sauce (**mixture of soy-sauce, sugar, sake, and seasoning**), and broil them again.

Broil over the charcoal fire. Repeat broiling and dipping in the sauce several times. You can use a brush to add the sauce.



Repeat it several times. Delicious broiled Eel is ready! It was the main dish for supper. Those days in secluded villages river fish was an important source of protein. Children enjoyed fishing not only as fun but also to help the family kitchen.

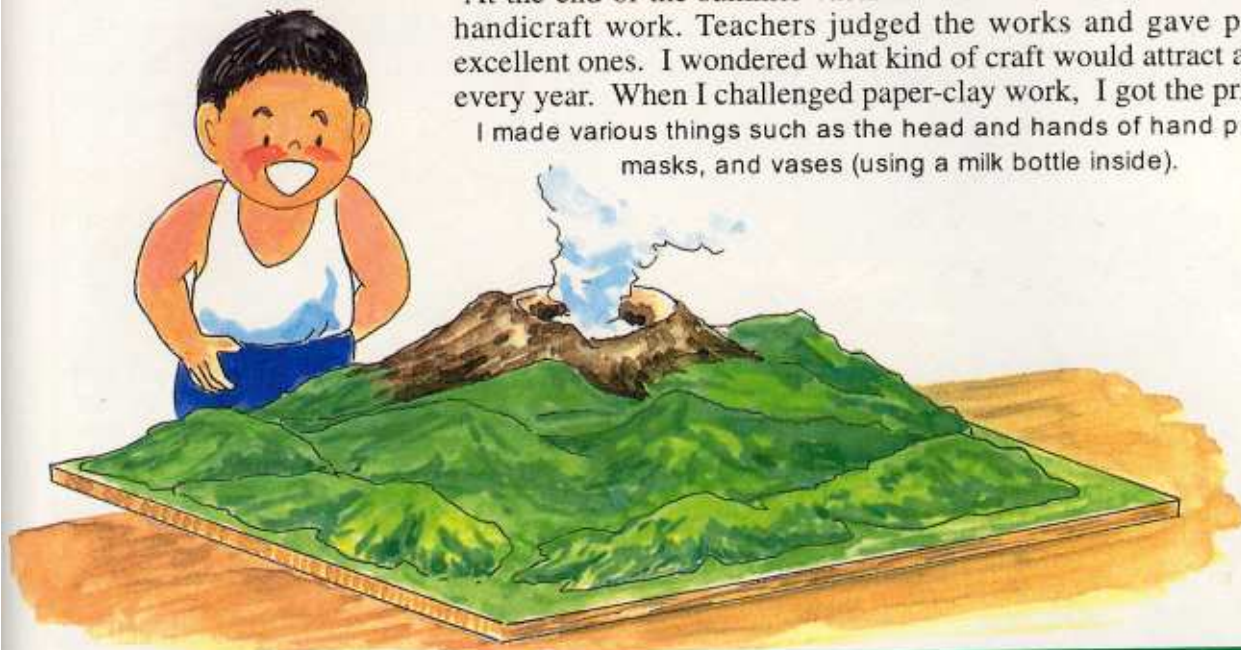
When I
had a GOOD
catch,
I shared
it with my
parents!



KAMI-NE-N-DO (Paper-Clay Work)

At the end of the summer vacation we had to submit some kind of handicraft work. Teachers judged the works and gave prizes to excellent ones. I wondered what kind of craft would attract attention every year. When I challenged paper-clay work, I got the prize.

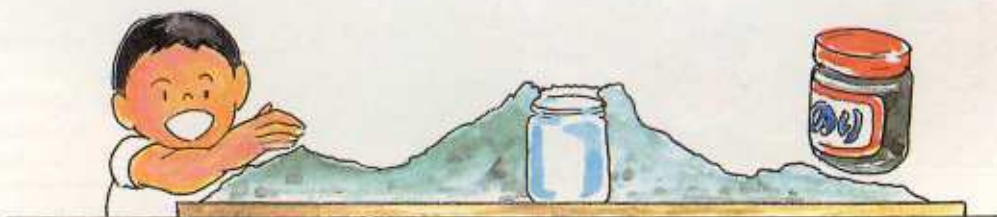
I made various things such as the head and hands of hand puppets, masks, and vases (using a milk bottle inside).



How to make paper-clay: Tear newspaper into small pieces and add starch and a little water.

Mix them well.

When not mixed well, boil it in a pan.



My paper-clay volcano had the crater of a small glass bottle.

Color the scenery.

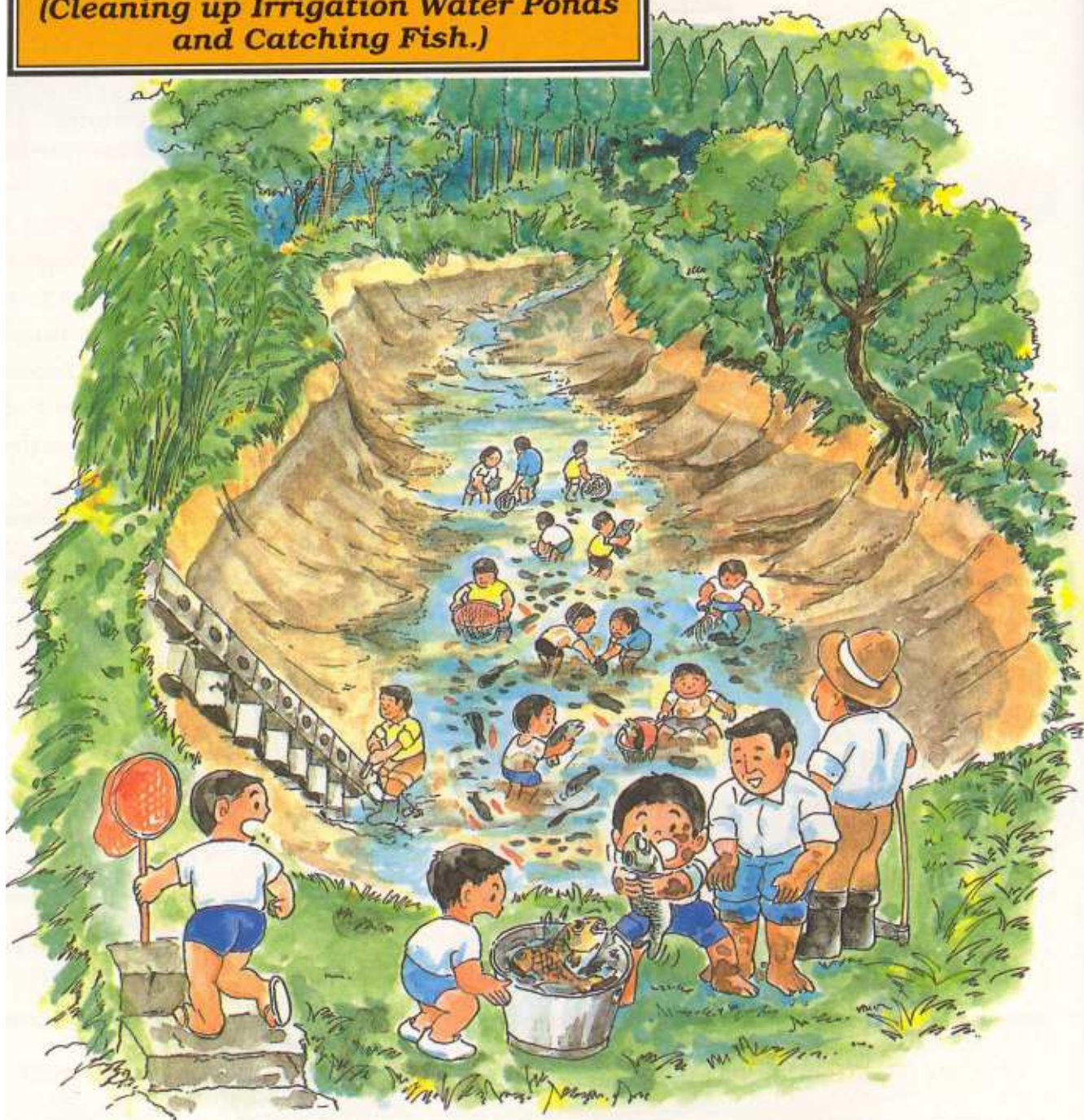
To make it more realistic, put a piece of dry ice and water!



(I got dry ice from a grocery store, where the refrigerator contained ice or dry ice. No electric refrigerator yet.)

TSU-TSU-MI-ZA-RA-E

(Cleaning up Irrigation Water Ponds
and Catching Fish.)



TSUTSUMI is a reservoir for farming. Water from springs and rain is saved for the stable water-supply into rice paddy fields. Each village had a few reservoirs above paddies. When sunny weather dried up the paddies, villagers discussed how much water should be drawn in. The plugs could control the quantity of the water-supply. Until the harvest season, water and fish (Carp, Crucian Carp, Eel) were also there.

One day in mid-September, the rice harvest season, the farmers went to the reservoir yelling, "Hey, let's clean up the TSUTSUMI (reservoir)."

Since water was no longer necessary, the reservoir was drawn by pulling out all the plugs. As the water became scarce, lots of fish appeared. We rushed into the muddy water and caught fish. Everyone enjoyed an easy fishing that day. Everybody, whether adult or child, got muddy and spent a joyful day.

Small fish were returned to the water for the next year. Fish laid eggs and the reservoir would have more fish next year.

TSUTSUMI kept one third of the water until the next rice planting season in early summer.

MI-ZO-YO-KE-HO-RI (Making Canals and Loach Catching)

Before the rice harvest season, farmers made ditches around the paddy fields to reduce water. In these ditches and swampy areas lots of Loaches could be found. We scooped them out with bamboo-baskets.



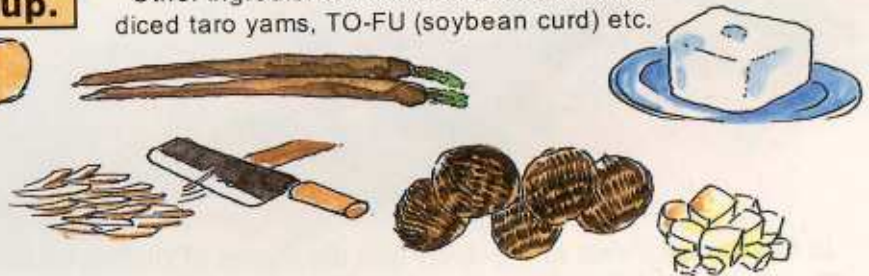
A Loach is a small, sticky, Eel-like fish in muddy fresh water. It was a good source of protein.

How to make loach soup.

Soak soy-beans with Loaches in water for the night, to make them discharge mud.



Other ingredients are sliced burdock roots, diced taro yams, TO-FU (soybean curd) etc.



Fry Loaches thoroughly with oil.



Add a pinch of salt and pepper.



Add burdock and taros, fry together for a while and add water, boil it until done (vegetables become soft).

Add more water and diced TOFU.



Scoop out lye.

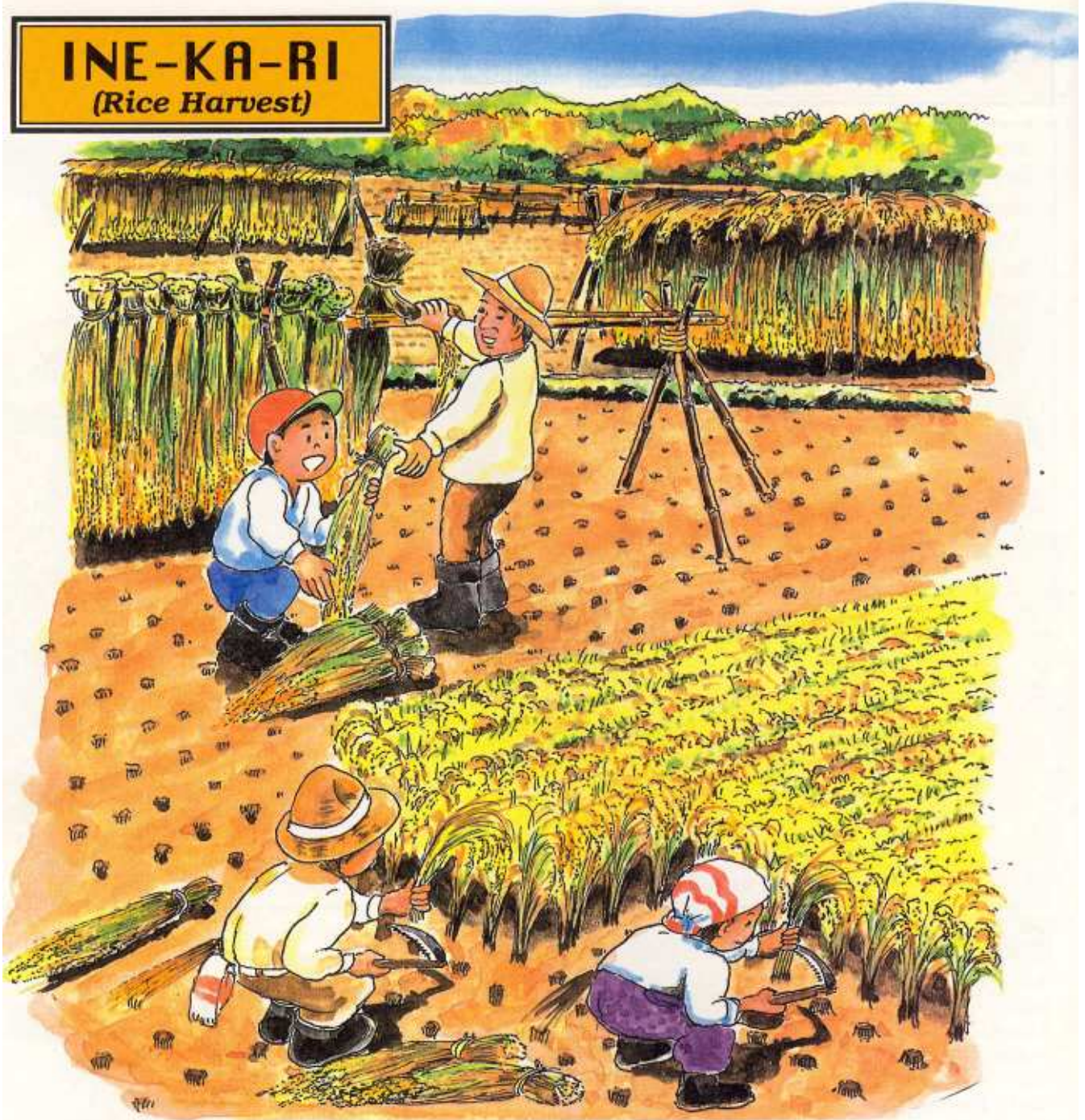


Add MISO (soy-bean paste),



grated ginger, and thinly sliced leeks at the end.

INE-KA-RI (Rice Harvest)



In October rice ears turn golden. It's the season of rice harvest everywhere under a clear sky.

The special sickles with a saw blade were used to cut several stalks at one time. Later 3 bunches of these stalks were made into one bundle with a rice plant rope. The rice bundles were then hung-dried. Each bundle split into 1 : 4 was hung on bamboo rods. Like dried flowers, they were hung up-side down.

When I was an elementary school boy, a few holidays were given so we could give a helping hand. They were special days off called **"busy farming season holidays"**. Girls made lunch boxes or helped in the kitchen. Boys, though not very helpful, joined the harvest. Since I was an only child, I also helped make lunch boxes.

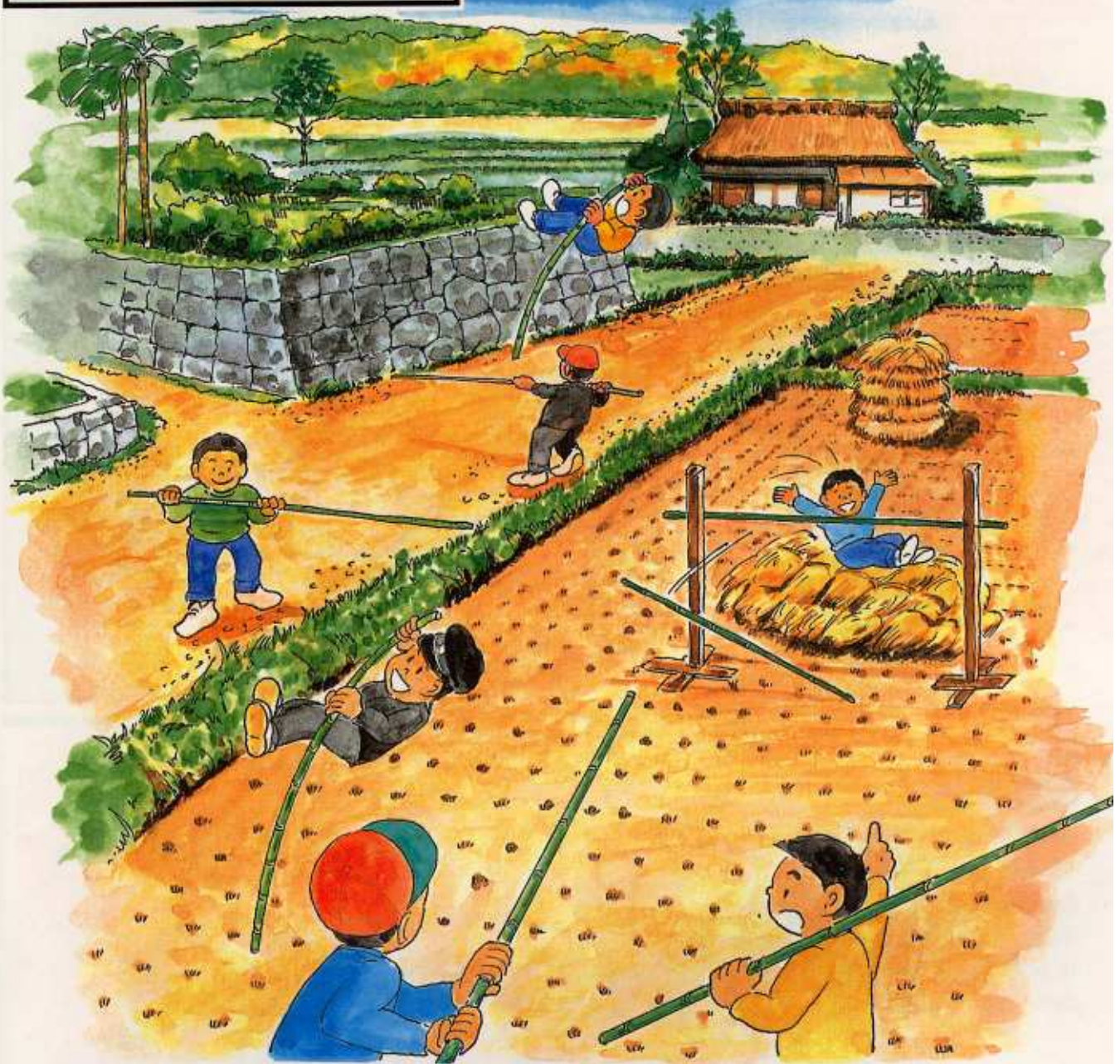
Harvesting was a tough job. But I tried to keep up with the speed of my parents and sometimes I won, which encouraged me and made me try harder. The lunch of rice balls were the most delicious. We ate them in the rice fields. For a few days, harvesting continued and all the family members joined in until the sky turned red at dusk.

Rice was the biggest income source, and parents told me, **"No help, and I won't buy you anything."** Naturally I tried very hard.

While harvesting parents were estimating, "how many rice bags would be filled this year?"

BO-TAKA-TO-BI

(Pole Vaulting)



After the Olympics in Rome, Tokyo was designated as the site of the next Olympic games. Children imitated various sports such as **high jump, hop-step-and-jump, jump** etc. The one I enjoyed most was **pole vaulting**.

Drive nails into 2 columns 5 cm apart from each other. A thin bamboo was set as a bar. The cushion was the dried straw in harvested paddies. We cut bamboo to suitable length, and made it stronger by roasting and polishing. I could clear the bar to some height, but the difficult point was the timing to throw away the pole. I had to throw it away quickly so that it would not drop on the bar.

Besides competing, we enjoyed pole vaulting in such ways as jumping to higher banks, or jumping over streams. Just jumping around the field saying, "FU-N-WAKA. FU-N-WAKA (flying, flying!)" was fun.

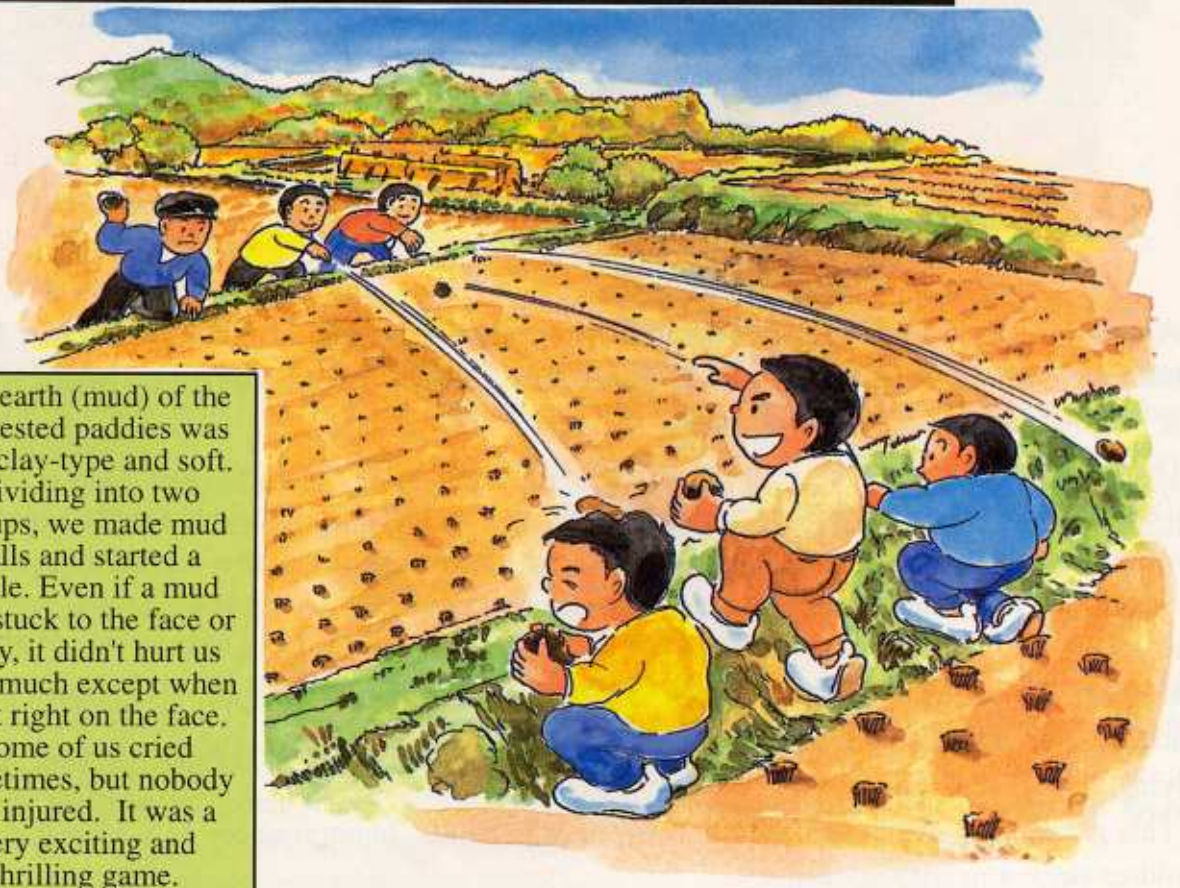
This game didn't seem popular even in my neighborhood. In my memory only a small group of children (including me) enjoyed it.

YA-RI-NA-GE (Javelin Throwing)



Paddy fields after the harvest were just like the big track field for us children. Everyone made his own spear out of bamboo and competed for who could throw farthest. Unless the spear stuck into the ground, the throw was a failure. It stuck well into the ground when I tied a cloth to the spear.

DORO-NA-GE-GAS-SEN (Mud-throwing Battle)

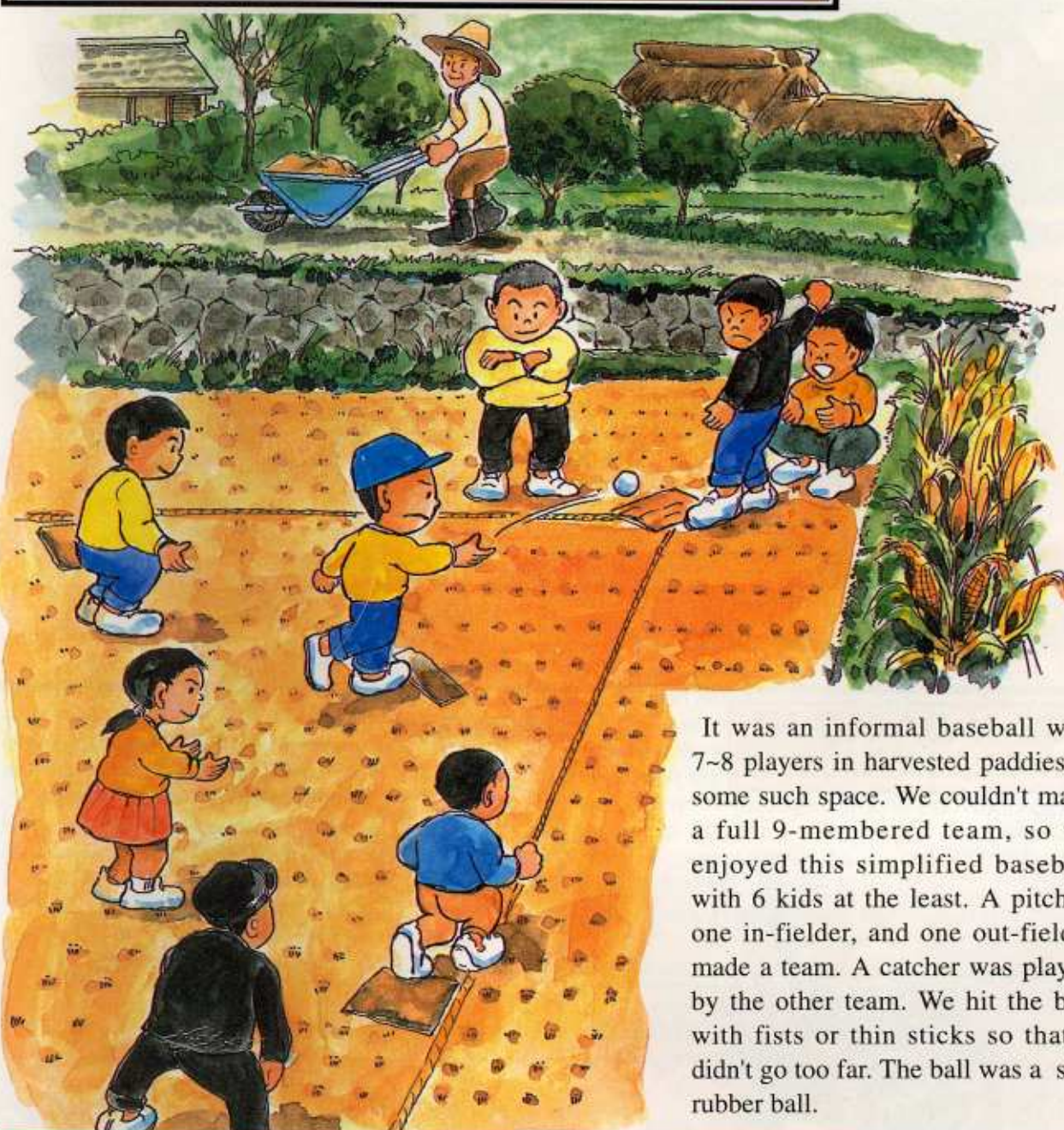


The earth (mud) of the harvested paddies was of a clay-type and soft.

Dividing into two groups, we made mud balls and started a battle. Even if a mud ball stuck to the face or body, it didn't hurt us very much except when it hit right on the face.

Some of us cried sometimes, but nobody got injured. It was a very exciting and thrilling game.

SAN-KAKU-YA-KYU (Triangle Baseball)



It was an informal baseball with 7~8 players in harvested paddies or some such space. We couldn't make a full 9-membered team, so we enjoyed this simplified baseball with 6 kids at the least. A pitcher, one in-fielder, and one out-fielder made a team. A catcher was played by the other team. We hit the ball with fists or thin sticks so that it didn't go too far. The ball was a soft rubber ball.

Other rules are as follows.

Up to second base, and fair-line angle is 45 degrees.

Pitch under-hand when hitting with fists, but an over-hand throw is all right when hitting with sticks.

Counting is the same as baseball, but only wide swings are counted as strikes. No four balls (no walk). Either hitting or a strike-out.

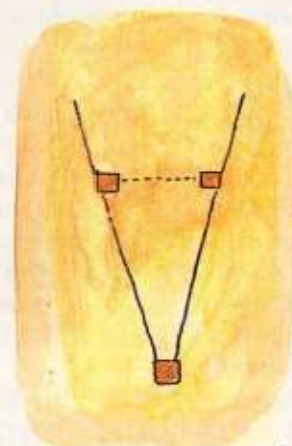
Three fouls makes one out.

When you hit within fair-line, run to first base. The defense catches the ball at first base--Out! The defense strikes the ball to the running player--also out. Even the thrown ball doesn't hit the runner and goes away, the runner can't reach 2nd base.

2nd base hits or home-runs are decided how far the ball goes, but even the biggest hit is out when caught by defense.

Runners can't take a lead while the pitcher holds a ball like in soft-ball.

No steals, nor bunting or squeeze since the catcher is a member of the defense team!



DAK-KOKU (Threshing)

After being hung-dried, harvested rice is threshed with a thresher. The hulled rice is then dried for several days. I was excited to see the motor.



SE-N-BA-KO-KI (Traditional Thresher)



Before threshers with motors were introduced, a treadle thresher was used. Teeth on the drum dropped off the chaff. It also dropped much straw, so with a TOHMI (separating fan, in the left) we separated rice from straw. The oldest type of SENBAKOKI was a cut wood with lots of metal bars attached. Threshing was done by pulling the rice stalks strongly between the bars.

Straw after being threshed is a wonderful resource with various uses, so it was bundled and stored in barns. (The use of straw is to be explained later.)

A thresher with motor was jointly bought and used in turn by neighborhood groups called **MOYAI**. MOYAI also labored and worked together.

TOHMI

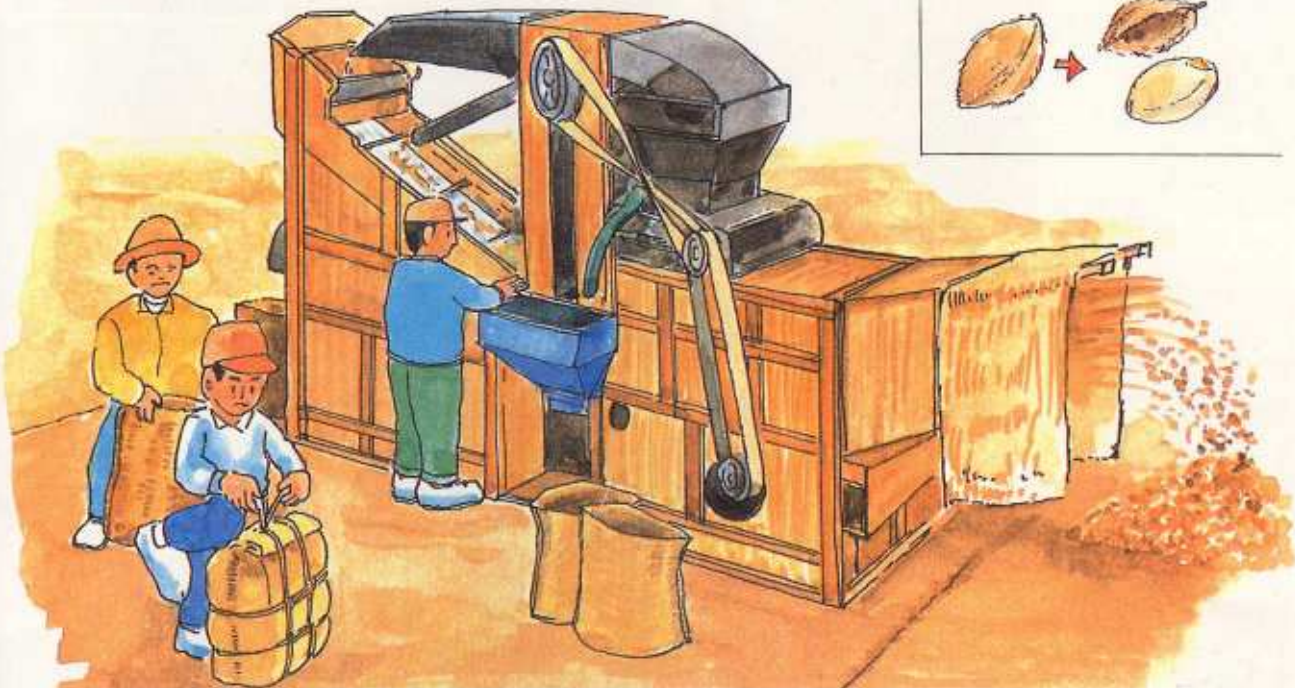
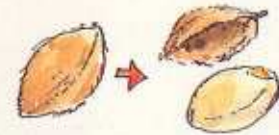
TOHMI was a big fan to separate rice from straw. Rice dropped down with its weight and straw is blown backward since it's light.



A heap of rice gradually became hollow like an ant-hell, which was fun to look at. So I often asked to let me sit on the TOHMI.

MOMI-SU-RI (Removing Chaff)

The chaff of the dried unhulled rice was then removed.



The hull remover machine was big and looked expensive, and most farmers didn't have their own. I heard my father say, "tomorrow Mr. Toda (who owned a machine and rent it to the farmers) will come, so I'll get everything ready." Since the rice harvest season was only several days, Mr. Toda seemed so busy to visit many farmers within a limited time. Once it was quite late at night when he appeared, and the work continued to midnight under the light, I remember. The machine separated hulled (brown) rice and hull. Farmers measured the plentiful rice from the machine and put it into straw bags. (1 measuring cup: 1 To = 18 liter, 1 straw bag = 4 To = 60 kg)

The rice was sent to agricultural CO-OPs for shipment. Now half an hour rice farming came to an end. At CO-OPs the rice is examined in dryness and quality and the payment was done through CO-OPs.

Incidentally, I remember, when I was 10 years old or so, that my father went to Tokyo for the petition of raising the farmers' price of rice. I respected my father talk about the National Diet building.

The remaining hull was burned from outside with a chimney in the center. It took hours to burn completely. The ash was soil neutralizer for rice paddies and other fields.

MOMI-GA-RA-YA-KI (Chaff Burning)



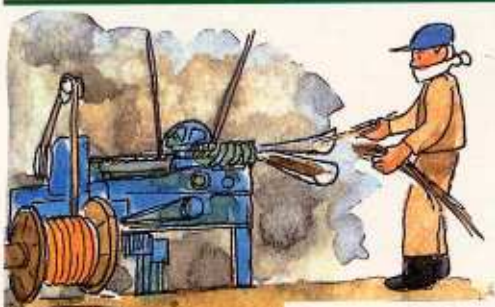
A heap of chaff burns slowly. Put sweet potatoes under the ashy part instead of the red-burning part. Potatoes and taros are also good.

After a while the potatoes are baked soft to the center, while the surface is not scorched. It's ready to eat!

VARIOUS USES OF RICE STRAW

Food And Bed Of Livestock

(Cattle And Sheep), And Compost Straw for bed made into compost later.



Rope, Rug, and Carpet

In my neighborhood there was a rope factory. Rope-weaving machines with two intakes wove ropes though I don't remember the shape of the machine well.



Clay-wall Strengthening

Shredded straw in 2 inches size were mixed into clay for walls. Straw was said to make walls solid and prevent cracks.

Baskets And Bags

Various baskets and bags for farming were made of straw.



TATAMI-MAT Center and Sandals

When I was a child, straw sandals (called WARAJI) had almost been out of use except for a few old people. The inside of tatami-mats was 100 % straw in those days (covered with woven rush). I remember watching the tatami making at the sites of new houses being built.



NATTO (Fermented Soybeans) and KONNYAKU (Yam Jelly)

Natto is to be explained in detail later. Konnyaku is made from konnyaku yam. The ash of straw is mixed in water. Mashed yam is soaked into the top (supernatant) of ash water to let it consolidate. Boil the solid yam. Konnyaku is ready.



Seedling Beds from Sweet Potatoes, And As A Bed For Fruits

Seedling beds from sweet potatoes were woven straw. Straw also covered the earth of fruits such as water melons, melons, and strawberries as a cushion to prevent weeds.

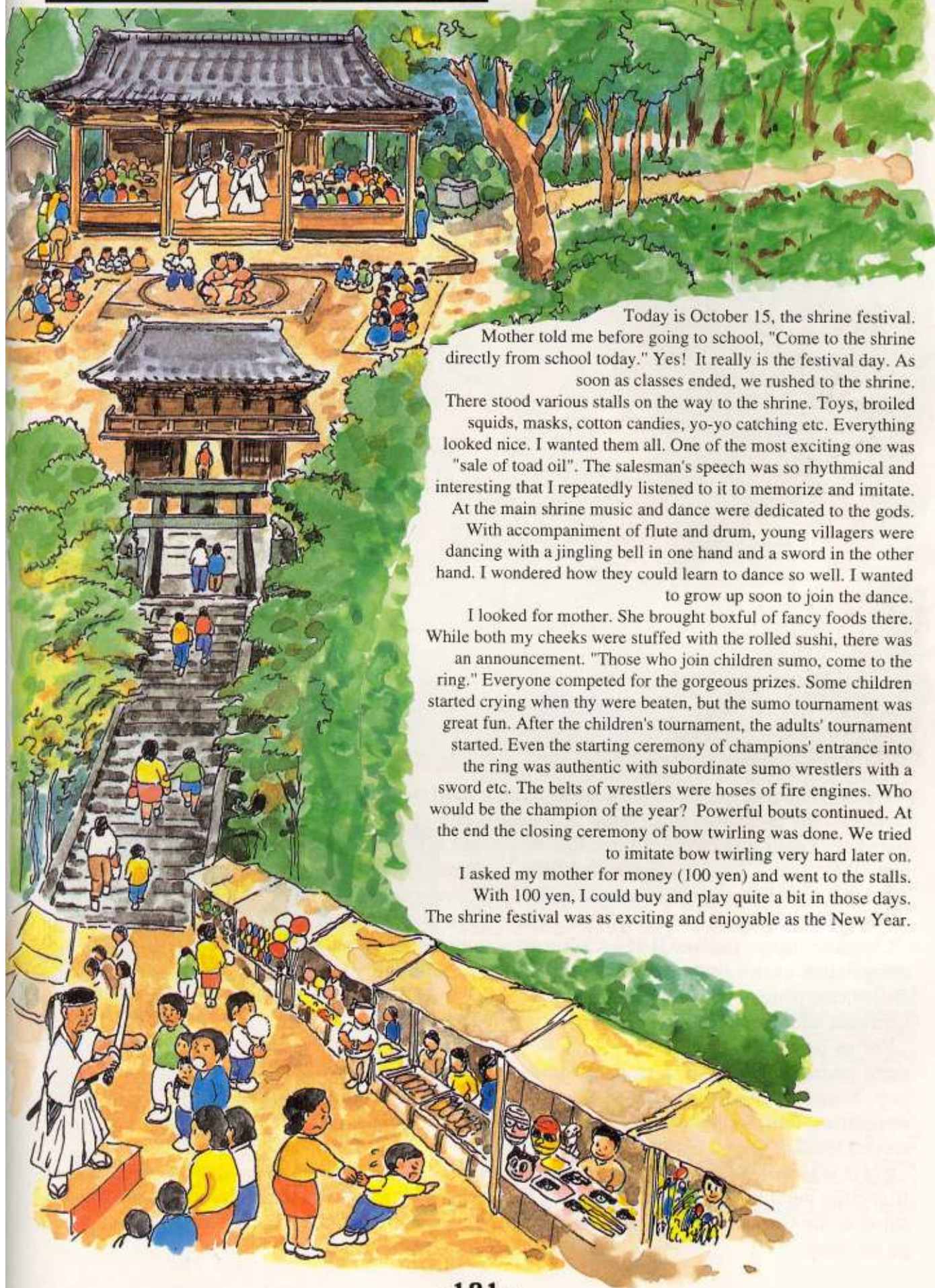


There must have been many more uses of straw. Every farmer stored a barnful of straw and used it up by the next harvest. Straw was valued during the whole year long. I loved to play in the straw barn. Upstairs, the barn was full of piled up straw. I made a secret hut, or jumped around as if on a trampoline. And I was scolded by mother. "I've told you again and again. Don't spoil the straw!"

I have countless memories of straw.

O-MIYA-MATSURI

(Shrine Festival)



Today is October 15, the shrine festival.

Mother told me before going to school, "Come to the shrine directly from school today." Yes! It really is the festival day. As

soon as classes ended, we rushed to the shrine.

There stood various stalls on the way to the shrine. Toys, broiled squids, masks, cotton candies, yo-yo catching etc. Everything looked nice. I wanted them all. One of the most exciting one was "sale of toad oil". The salesman's speech was so rhythmical and interesting that I repeatedly listened to it to memorize and imitate.

At the main shrine music and dance were dedicated to the gods.

With accompaniment of flute and drum, young villagers were dancing with a jingling bell in one hand and a sword in the other hand. I wondered how they could learn to dance so well. I wanted

to grow up soon to join the dance.

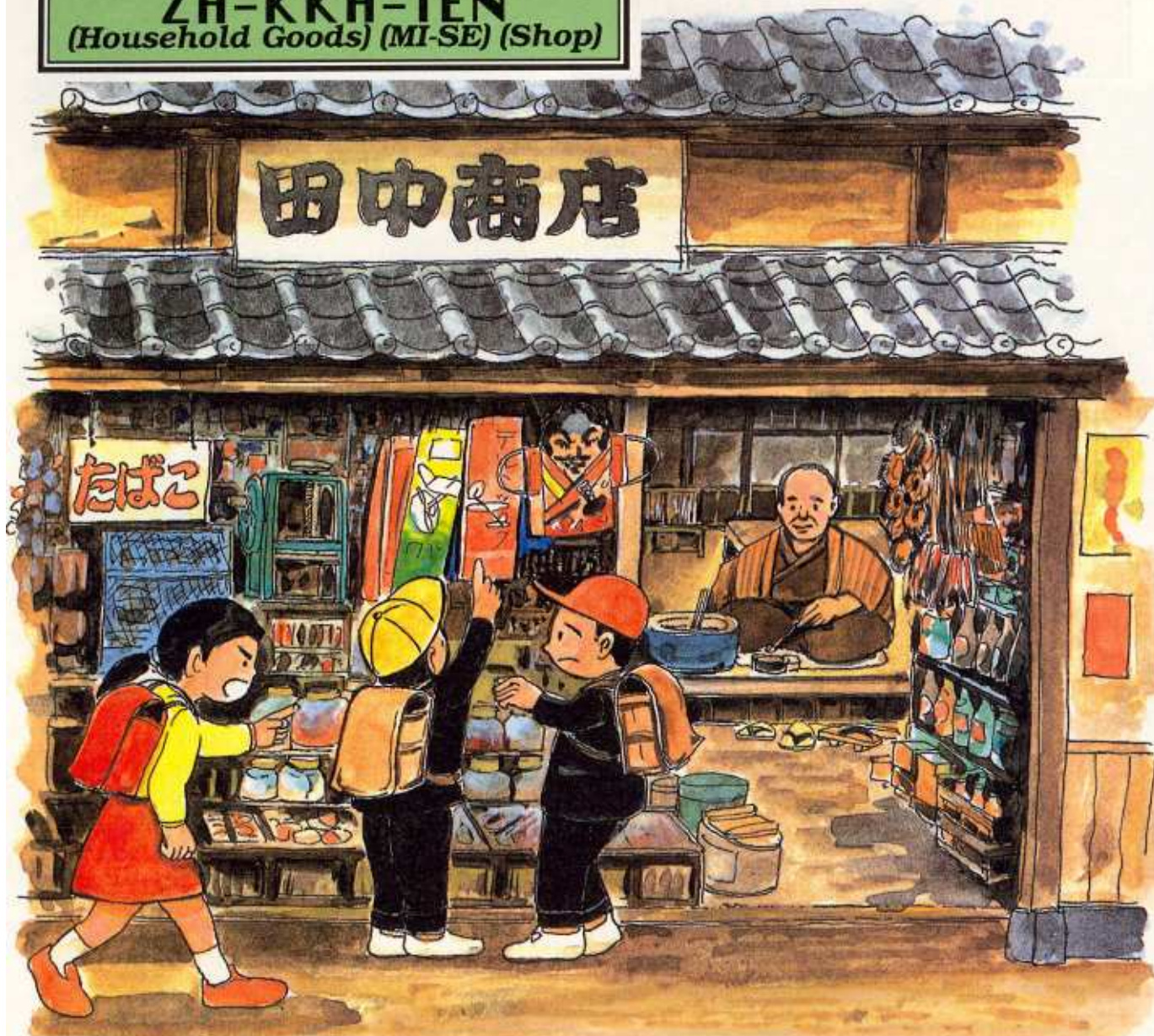
I looked for mother. She brought boxful of fancy foods there. While both my cheeks were stuffed with the rolled sushi, there was an announcement. "Those who join children sumo, come to the ring." Everyone competed for the gorgeous prizes. Some children started crying when they were beaten, but the sumo tournament was great fun. After the children's tournament, the adults' tournament started. Even the starting ceremony of champions' entrance into the ring was authentic with subordinate sumo wrestlers with a sword etc. The belts of wrestlers were hoses of fire engines. Who would be the champion of the year? Powerful bouts continued. At the end the closing ceremony of bow twirling was done. We tried

to imitate bow twirling very hard later on.

I asked my mother for money (100 yen) and went to the stalls.

With 100 yen, I could buy and play quite a bit in those days. The shrine festival was as exciting and enjoyable as the New Year.

ZA-KKA-TEN (Household Goods) (MI-SE) (Shop)



Near my house were two such shops, with a third on the long road going to school. Most of them had all sorts of goods, some had alcohol and cigarettes, the one near school had lots of stationery goods and so on. I think that they didn't sell fruit and vegetables because most houses grew their own. There was also very little beef and pork sold. Most of the fish sold were salt-dried, but sometimes they had unsalted fish. We hardly ever ate meat or raw fish, in fact if we did it was usually frozen red whale-meat or meat in a one-pot type of food such as curry etc.

Cleaning things such as HATAKI(duster), scrubbing brushes, brooms and dust-pans; washing things such as scrubbing boards, starch, pegs; kitchen things such as pots, knives, matches, chopsticks, plates... these were there as a matter of course. Also often squeezed in were nails, wire, hardware and field tools such as hoes.

For us these shops were overflowing with dreams. Delicious food: cakes, caramel with chance game prizes, bubble gum, chocolate, thrush eggs, bean paste buns, ice flakes with syrup and soda pop. Toys like model airplane kits, spinning tops, kites, flip-cards and marbles. Even fishing equipment; the place was full of things we wanted. Going home from school we would stand around looking at it all.

But it was forbidden to buy anything except school necessities on the way home from school. If another pupil told the teacher, it would mean running around the school grounds once, or being stood in the corridor. That is why we would often sneak in the back, buy and eat something, then go on home.

KU-JI-MO-NO (Lotteries)



MIZU-DASHI-KUJI
(Water Lottery)

We would buy lottery papers from the shop (Five or ten yen, depending on the rank) and when they were put in water characters would become visible. "Something-or-other prize!" meant you won what was written, but usually it was a consolation prize of one sweet or one stick of gum. The big prizes of balloons or toy pistols urged us on.



YABURI-TORI-KUJI
(Tear-out Lottery)

This kind of lottery was popular with sweetened bean lollipop or sugar candy. Over a wooden frame of squares thick paper was stretched. Tearing open the paper of one square, we would take out whatever was inside. If there was a small lollipop inside, that was that. In other words it was a consolation prize. If there was a paper with "Something-or other prize" written on it, you could receive it. There was also a type where you bought the smallest bag and would find a "something -or-other prize," which got bigger.



HIMO-HIKI-KUJI
(String Pulling Lottery)

Lots of strings are attached to various prizes. Some of the prizes were model planes and pistols worth a thousand yen, which could be bought with a ten yen lottery ticket. So if you were lucky, you won in a big way. From the bunch of strings we would choose one, and with a shout of "Ei! win!" pull one. But it was always something like a stick of bubble gum. The shop owner would say "Here you are, a consolation prize," and give us a stick of the same kind of bubble gum, leaving the prize attached. They would then mix up the prizes so you couldn't tell which was which. Once when the shop keeper wasn't looking, I pulled the string from the prize end. My plan was to notice which string moved at the top, and remember it. But not one string at the top moved! Ever since then I never tried that lottery again. With the "tear out lottery" one time there were about five or six bags left, from first to third prize. "If I buy all the bags, then all the prizes are automatically mine, aren't they?" I said to the shop keeper and although I got a surly look, I took all of them home...

U-TSU-SHI-GAMI (Tatoos)

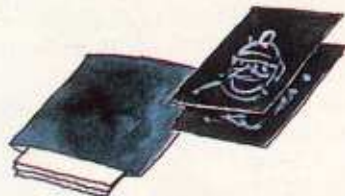
Various characters, flowers, birds etc. would be printed onto a sheet.

You can transfer them to where you want. Wet the back with water and rub gently. Peel the backing paper off. If it doesn't stick well, moisten it a little more, and try again. Putting it onto your skin often left dirty marks hard to get off, so I didn't do it very often.



NI-KKOH-SHA-SHIN (Sunshine Photos)

The negatives were sold in the shops, in sets.



If you put one negative with photo paper in the sunshine, for two or three minutes you would get a positive picture.

The black on the negative became white, and the white, black. But because we didn't have any holding liquid, after a while the whole picture went black.



NI-KKE-I GAMI (Sinamon Application Paper)

One paper cost about 1 yen.



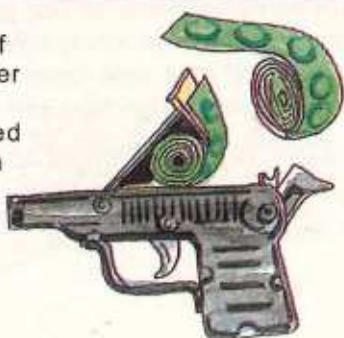
It was a lottery with the prize written in the hinge part. If you win once, you were allowed to have another go. If I was lucky I would buy ten papers and have twenty to thirty wins.

If you lick it too much, the food coloring comes off and your tongue goes the same color.



HYAKU-REN-PATSU-JYU (100 Shots Running Pistol)

Little pellets of gunpowder are sandwiched between paper tapes.



You put the rolled up tape in a pistol specially made for this.



It only makes a bang, and no bullets come out.

It was fun to play at cowboys and Indians.

MO- KEI-HI-KOH-KI (Model Airplanes)



At that time there was a big boom of model airplanes. Every boy had one or two, and made their own particular innovations, then had competitions for the longest or highest flying.

Most of us bought the kit and made them up, but among the older boys, sometimes someone would build one his own.

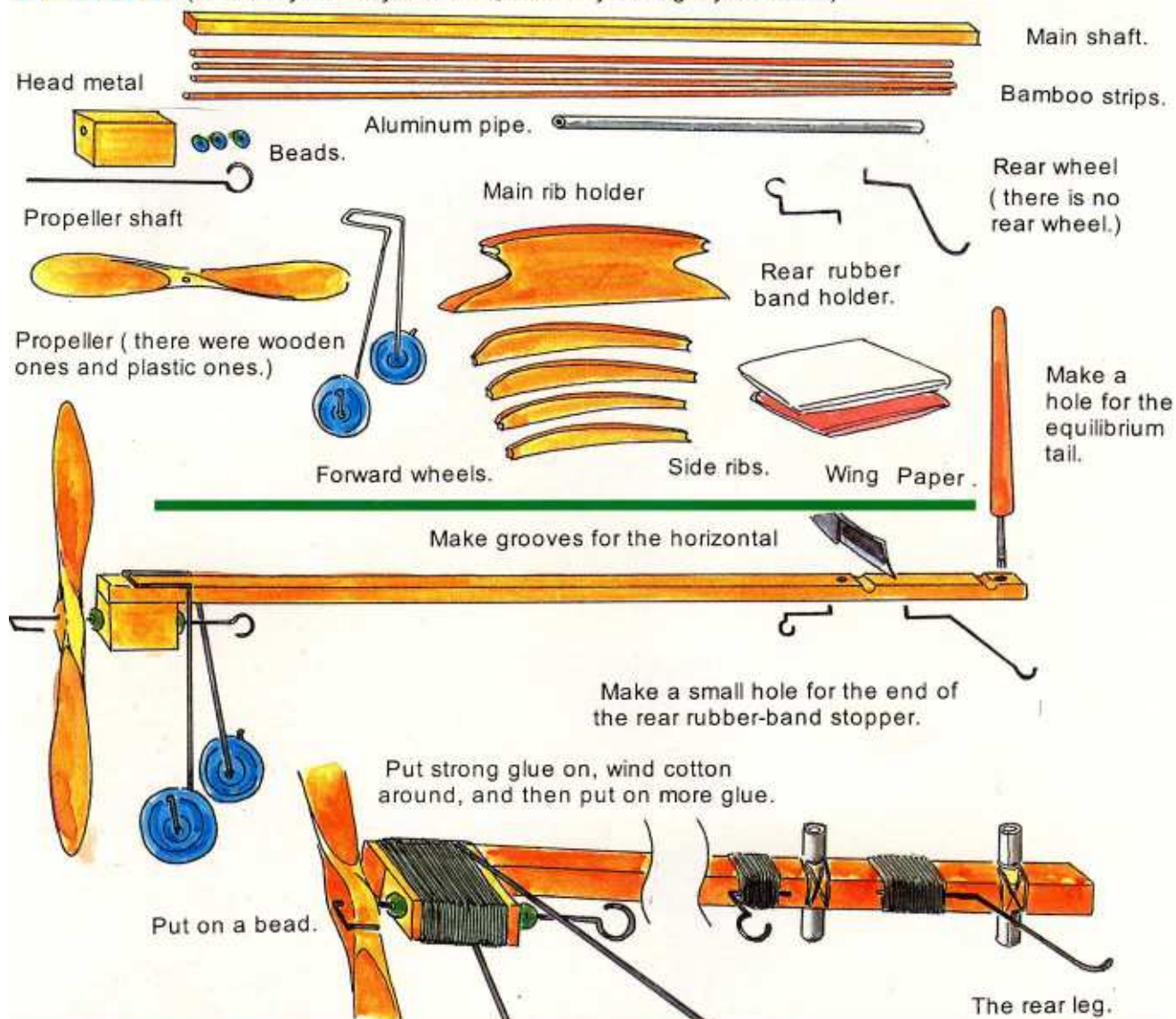
At that time there were various kits: Telmic A. B, Mach, Sky, Arrow, Sony, Hope and so on, I seem to remember.

Whenever the right season came after the rice had been harvested in autumn, I made Telmic E which was my favorite one. Then I went into the empty rice paddies and flew it.

At that time the handicraft program at school included making model airplanes for the whole school, and we had a big rally. We timed the flight times with a stop watch to decide the longest flying plane. I think we took the total or average of three flights. There were several prizes; for each grade, for pupils of the same grade, for each class, and so on. The prize was a certificate and several kits. I remember, when I was in the 5th or 6th grade, that I got a prize of a kit, although I wasn't first.

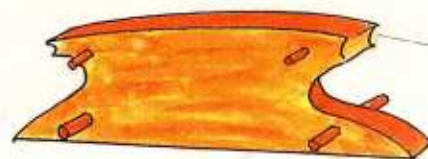
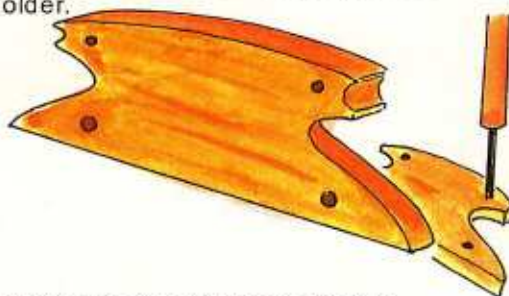
The empty rice paddies after harvest, and the airplanes humming around in the wide autumn sky
Fly high in the sky! Fly on!

METHOD: (This is my memory of the kit, so it may be slightly different.)



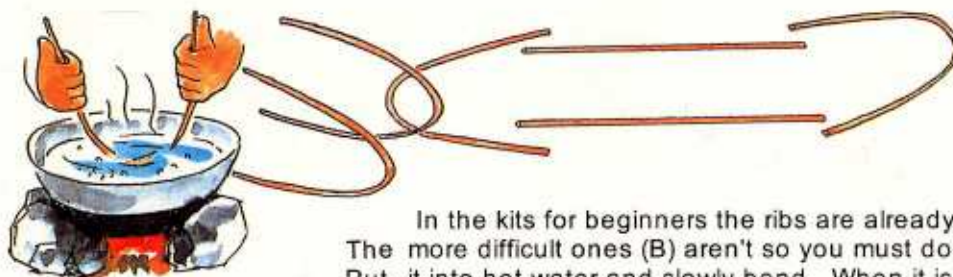
Make four holes in the main rib holder.

If you don't do it carefully it will split.



Put a thin bamboo strip through the holes.

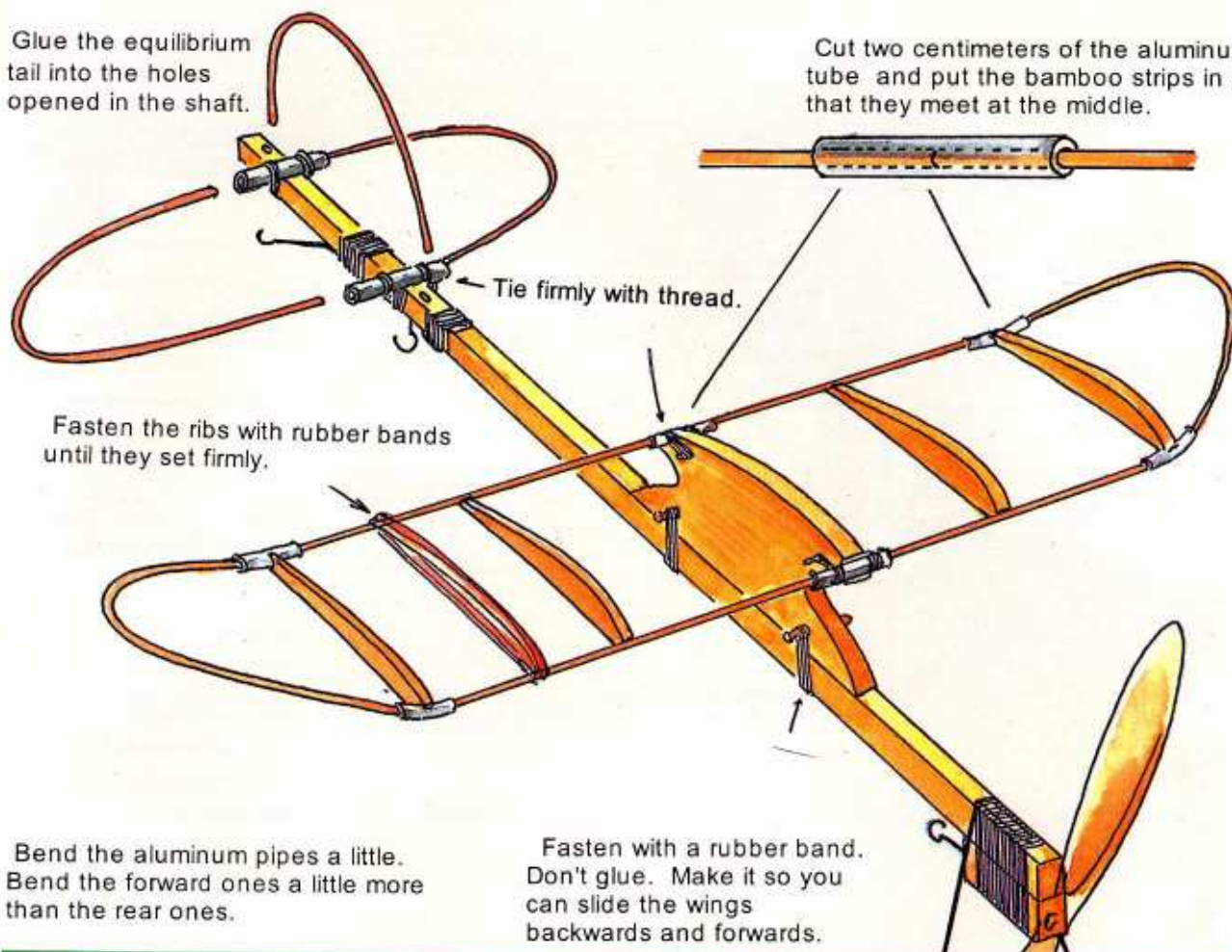
The two upper holes are for attaching the ribs, and the lower two are for attaching the rubber bands which hold the shaft to the main rib holder.



In the kits for beginners the ribs are already bent. The more difficult ones (B) aren't so you must do it yourself. Put it into hot water and slowly bend. When it is the right shape quickly plunge it into cold water to keep the shape.

Glue the equilibrium tail into the holes opened in the shaft.

Cut two centimeters of the aluminum tube and put the bamboo strips in so that they meet at the middle.



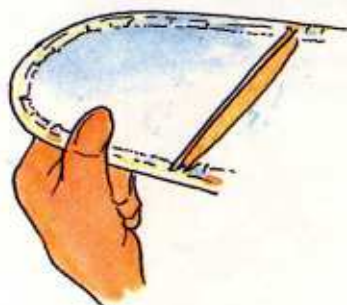
When you have the framework made you can paste on the special paper.

The paper which is left over should be cut before the glue dries, then pressed round the bamboo with your fingers. This is hard to do without making a mistake.



Fold over the extra paper.

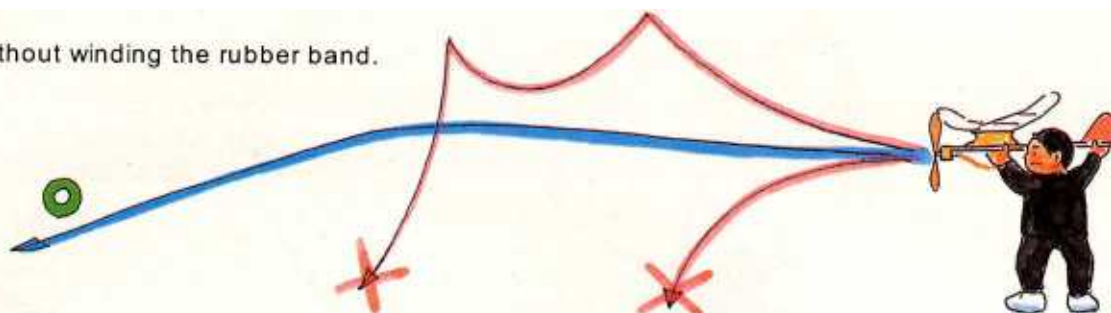
Spray water on the paper, but if you spray too much it will rip when it dries.



Don't try to hurry the drying but let it dry naturally. When the paper stretches, the plane is ready. For parts that aren't stretched properly you can spray just that part again.

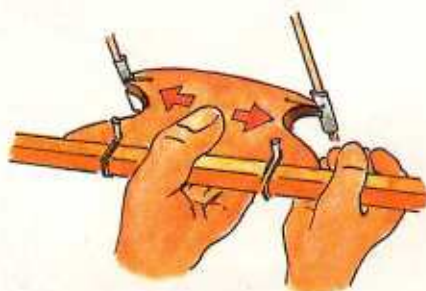
Test fly without winding the rubber band.

Perfect.



The center of balance is too far back.

The center of balance is too far forward.



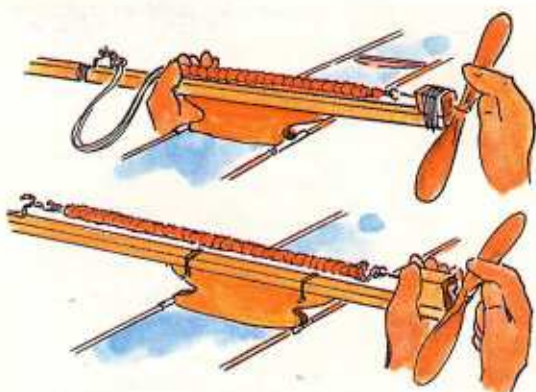
Adjusting the center of balance.



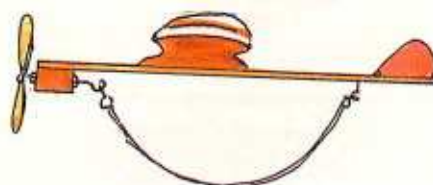
If it veers to the right or left, you can correct it by bending the aluminum pipe. Bend the opposite side it veers to. Another way is to do as in the picture and add a weight (the sun of the Japanese flag, for instance) to the opposite wing that it veers to.

WINDING THE BAND.

When winding it alone.



Get a friend to hold the rear end of the band, or use a branch or nail to hold it. When the band is completely twisted hook it onto the band holder.



Carelessly letting go is dangerous.

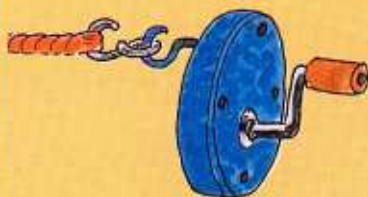


The band twisted two or three times.



Attaching an "S" shaped hook prevents the band from snapping.

GRINDER A handy tool which turns something five turns with one turn of the handle. A speedy way to wind up the band.



Being expensive (about 500 yen) only a few people had one. I didn't have one.

Use soapy water to help lengthen the life of the band.



How to fly it. With one hand hold the propeller and with the other hand hold the back part of the plane.

Let go of the propeller and when it moves by itself give it a gentle push. It is not good to throw it strongly.

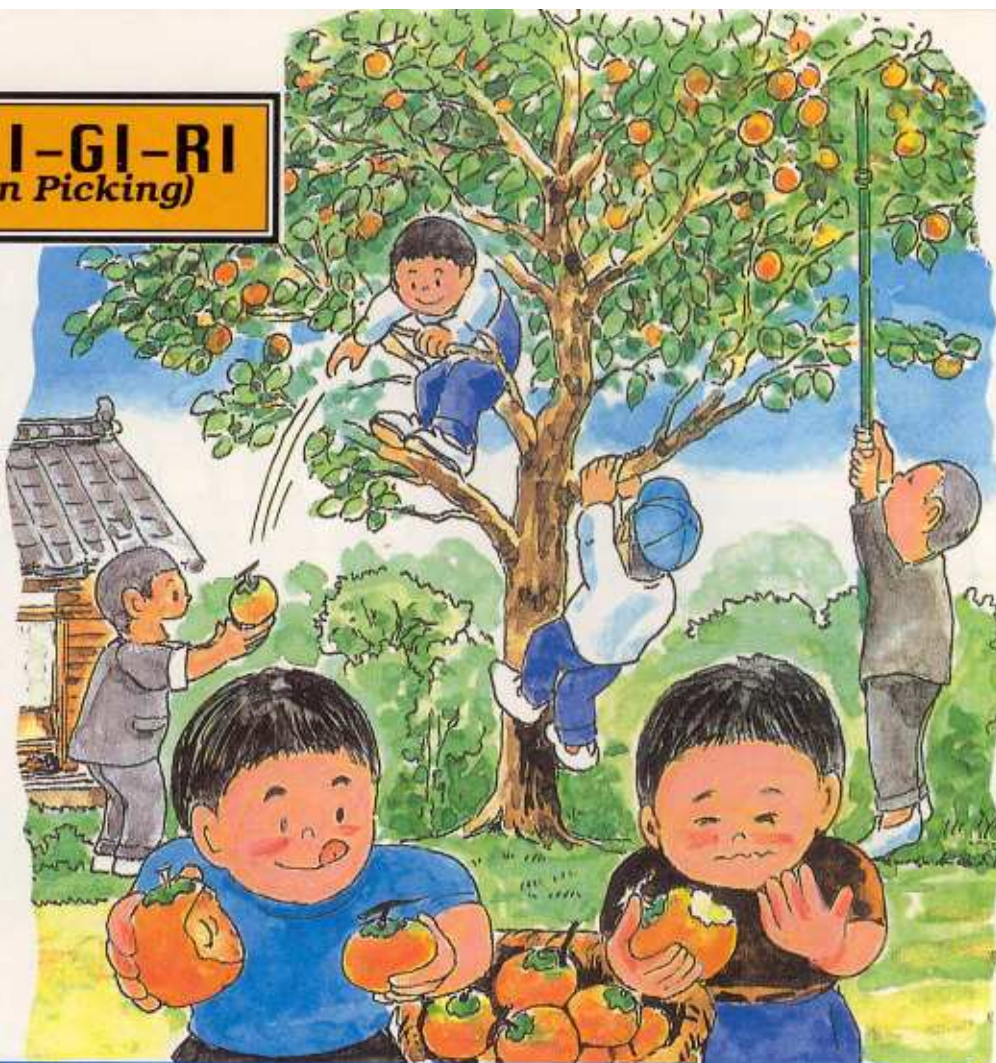


KAKI-CHI-GI-RI (Persimmon Picking)

The end of September is the time the persimmons are almost sweet. The last of the cicadas finish chirping at this time.

Some said that the "sesame like pattern of the persimmon" which is a sign of sweetness, are the droppings of the cicadas.

Many different species of persimmons allow us to eat them from September till the New Year, the last being the "KO-HARU (small spring)" variety.



GA-SSO (Persimmon Picker)



This picker uses thin bamboo. Smaller and shorter trees present no problem but tall trees need a picking tool.



Cut until the first bamboo notch.

To stop it splitting further tie it with rope or wire.

Pick a bamboo the same thickness at top and bottom. Cut into a neat (V) shape so that the persimmon tree branches slide into it and get caught.

HOW TO PICK.



Choose your persimmon. **Push** sharply upwards to pinch the branch.



Twist from side to side to break the branch.



Insert something bigger than the persimmon branch, to loosen it.

To be able to use bitter persimmons for dried fruit they must have the branch attached. (to make entry next page.)

TSU-RU-SHI-GAKI

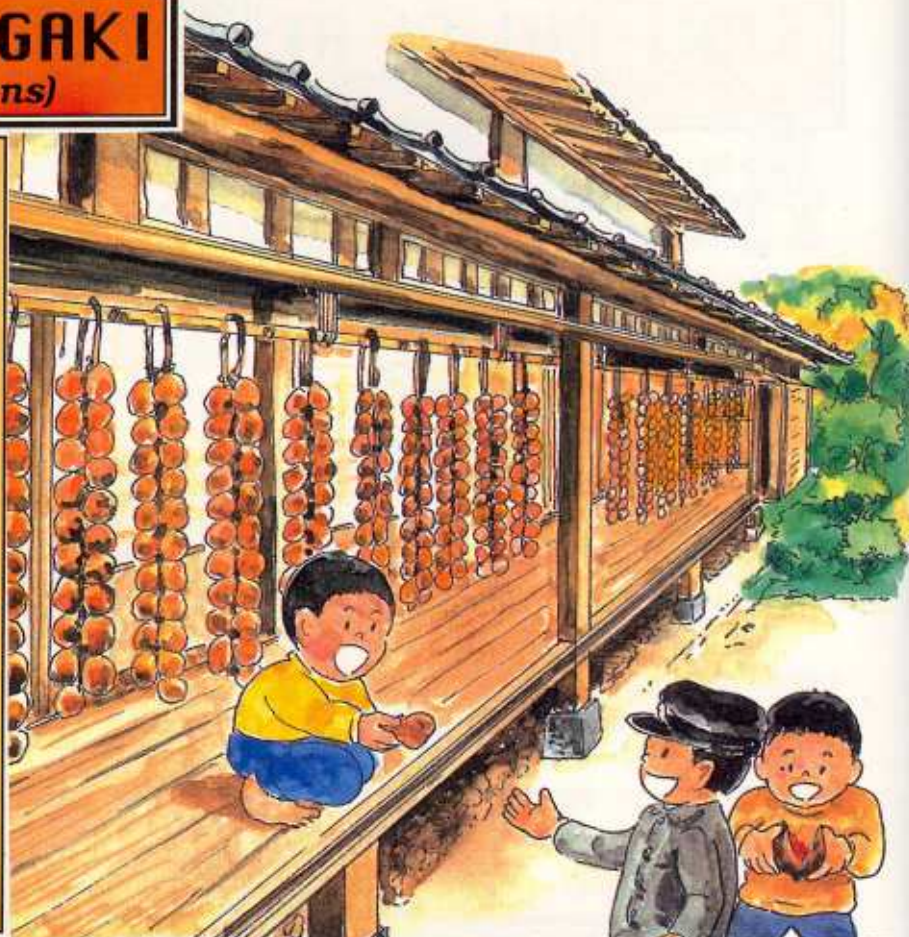
(Dried Persimmons)

"Hanging persimmons" is what we called dried persimmons. These are made by taking bitter persimmons, peeling them and hanging them up under the eaves. They become sweet and are preserved food.

There were even many farm houses that made enough to take to market to sell. In my house we usually only made enough for ourselves. Coming home from school I would often have some as a snack. During the long autumn evenings while watching television, it was always dried persimmons that our hands reached out for.

"If you eat them before they're even ready, they'll never get done!"

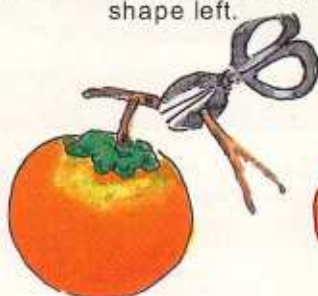
I was scolded.



Before they are too ripe, pick them with a little of the branch still attached.



Cut the branches so there is just a good [T] shape left.



Carefully take the leaves off.



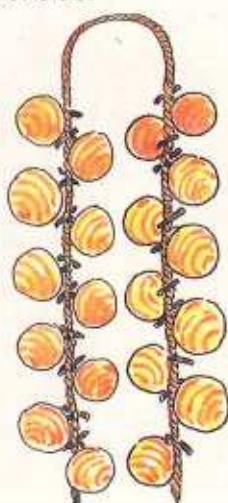
Peel as thin as possible. It is best going round.



Loosening the rope twine, insert the branch.



Leaving a spare space in the middle, hang about ten on either side.



When they get a little soft, gently squeeze them.



At this stage they also taste good. They should be squeezed into a flat shape.



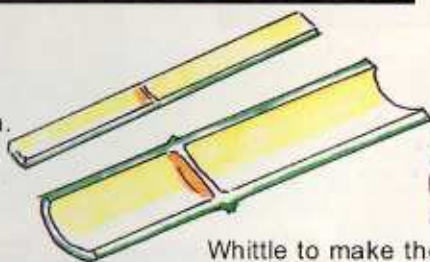
After drying some more, a fine white powder will appear.



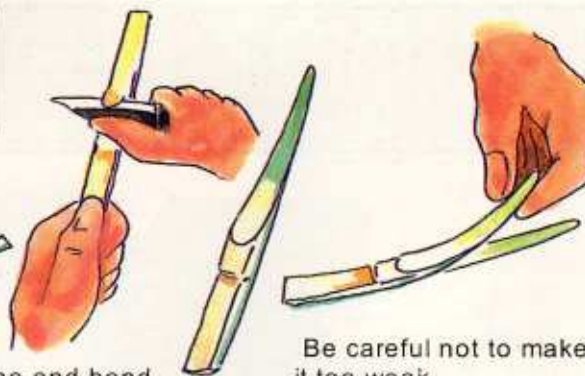
After about a month **delicious dried persimmon** are ready. Keep them in a can, and they are preserved food.

TAKE-BERA-KAWA-MU-KI (Bamboo Skin Peeler)

Choose bamboo that is a little thick. As in the picture, make it into a spatula. It is better not to use new bamboo for this; find some that is a little old.



Whittle to make the end bend.



Be careful not to make it too weak.

HOW TO PEEL.

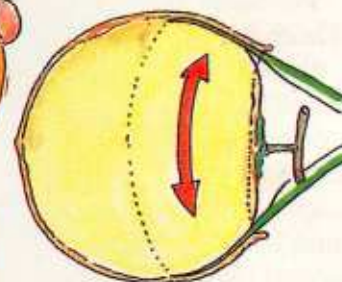
Peel the first ring with a knife.



Insert the bamboo blades.



While turning the persimmon around push the blades in deeper and deeper



Using the suppleness of the bamboo, it separates the skin and the flesh of the apple.



Move it from right to left, to peel.



To finish take off the [cap] that has been peeled.



I used to be able to peel a persimmon in less than 30 seconds by this method. Compared to a knife the peeling is much thinner, and the peeled persimmon is very neat, and excellent for dried persimmons.

AO-SHI-GAKI (Unripe Bitter Persimmon)



This is the method for treating persimmons which are very bitter, in their not yet ripe state.

In a big pot (There used to be big wood stoves outside, about big enough to bath a baby in, which seemed to be used for making konnyaku (vegetable jelly) and tofu) put in straw and water and heat it to 34 to 35 degrees. Put in the persimmons and keep it simmering very gently for one or two days. The straw acts on it to take out the bitterness. As the persimmon looks exactly like a bitter persimmon, I would skite to friends that I could eat bitter persimmons and try to trick them. But as people made them here and there, my friends soon caught on to the trick.

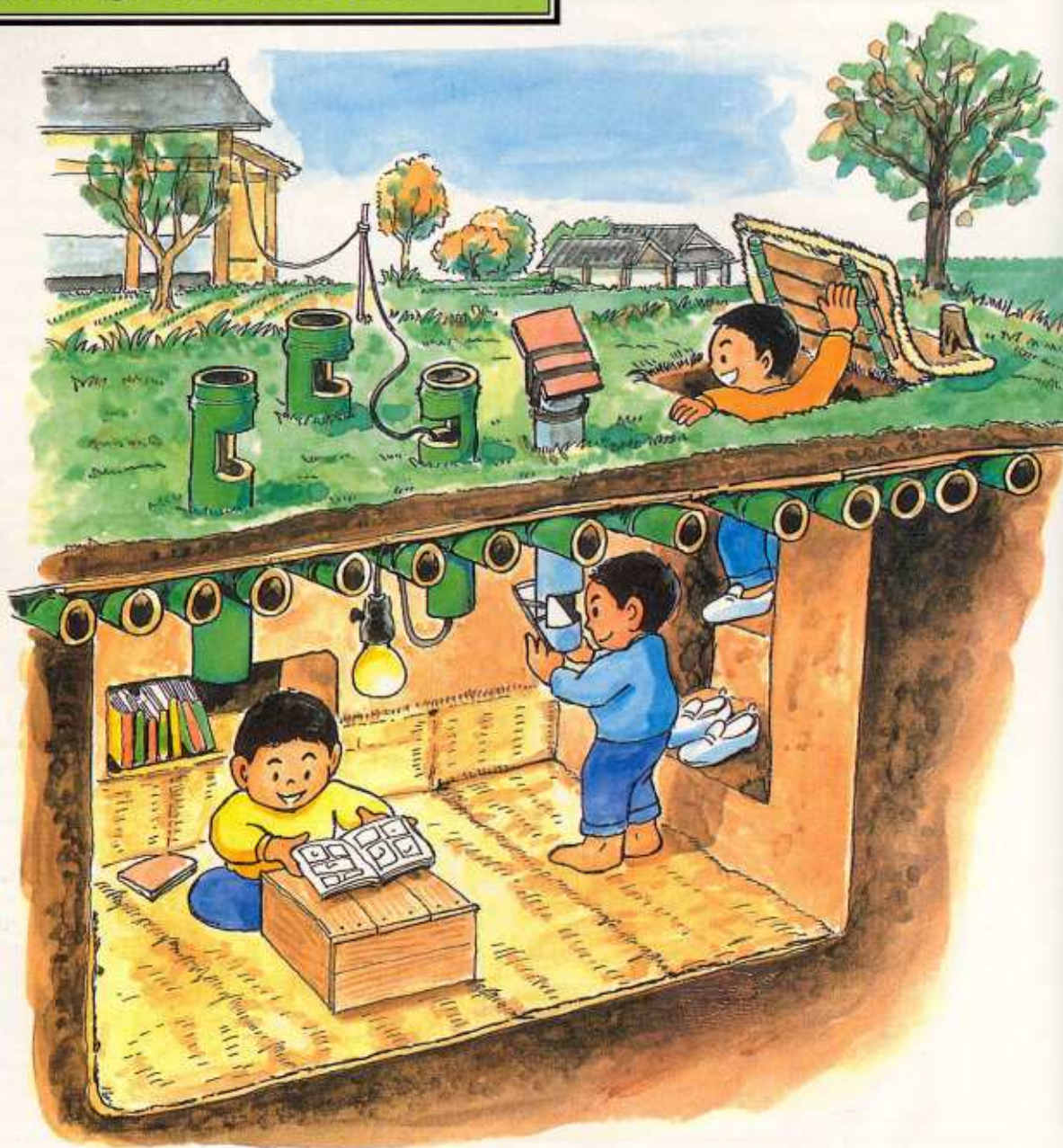
I've also heard of taking out the bitterness by making persimmon pickle in **strong spirits** , but I don't know how it was done.

CHI-KA-KA-KU-RE-GA

(Underground Hide-Out)

As well as tree hide-outs we also made underground hide outs.

By the mountain at the back of my place, we secretly made one. There we played battlelike games. Suddenly disappearing into what looked like an ordinary field was great fun.

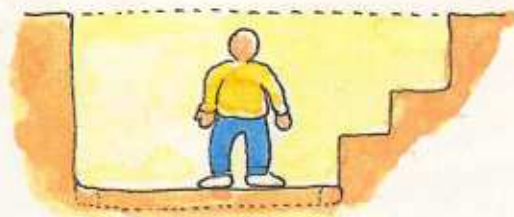


We knew that, if we were found, we would be scolded, and that would be the end of our hide-out, so we were careful not to be found out by either of my parents.

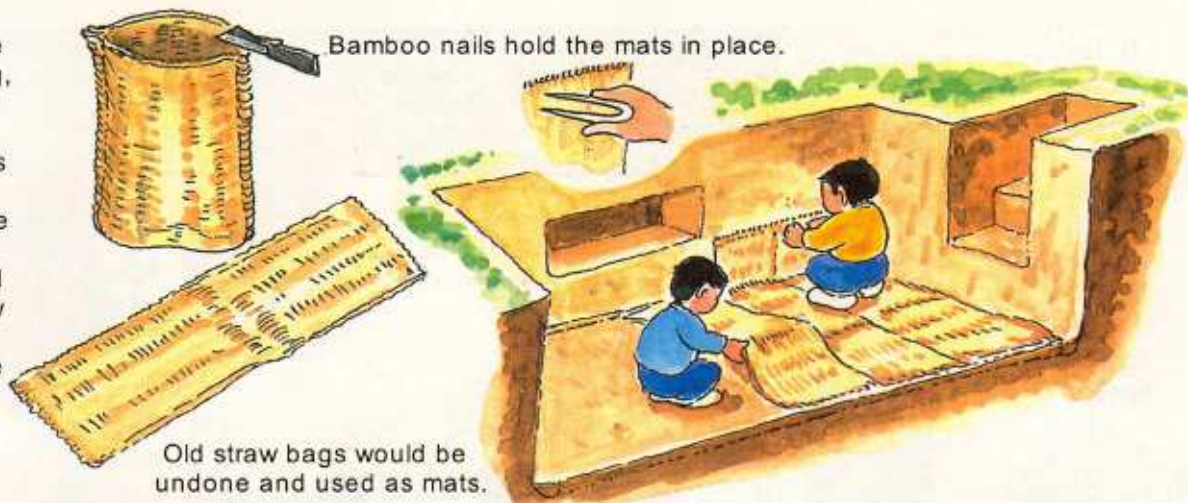


While they were both at work in the fields, two or three friends would come help with the digging. We made it deep enough to be able to stand and walk inside.

Two or three steps make the entrance way. To prevent the rain coming in, we dug around it.



Once the hole is dug, the inside is made. Straw mats are put against the walls, straw, and then straw mats are laid on the floor.



Bamboo nails hold the mats in place.

Old straw bags would be undone and used as mats.

Once the interior is done, the ceiling is made with (mohso) bamboo. It is best to have so many there are hardly any gaps.

Use big strong bamboo so that even with a layer of earth and someone standing on it, it doesn't become a pitfall.



If there are still gaps, put planks or bits of sheets of tin on it. On top of that put agricultural plastic sheeting.



This plastic sheeting is the kind used for strawberries, melon and water-melon, and we would use sheets that couldn't be used in the fields any more.

The earth that has been dug out is put on top. While doing this, the bamboo air pipes and periscope are embedded. Don't put too much earth on, or the roof might collapse. At the end put grass with its roots, on top to make it look more natural.

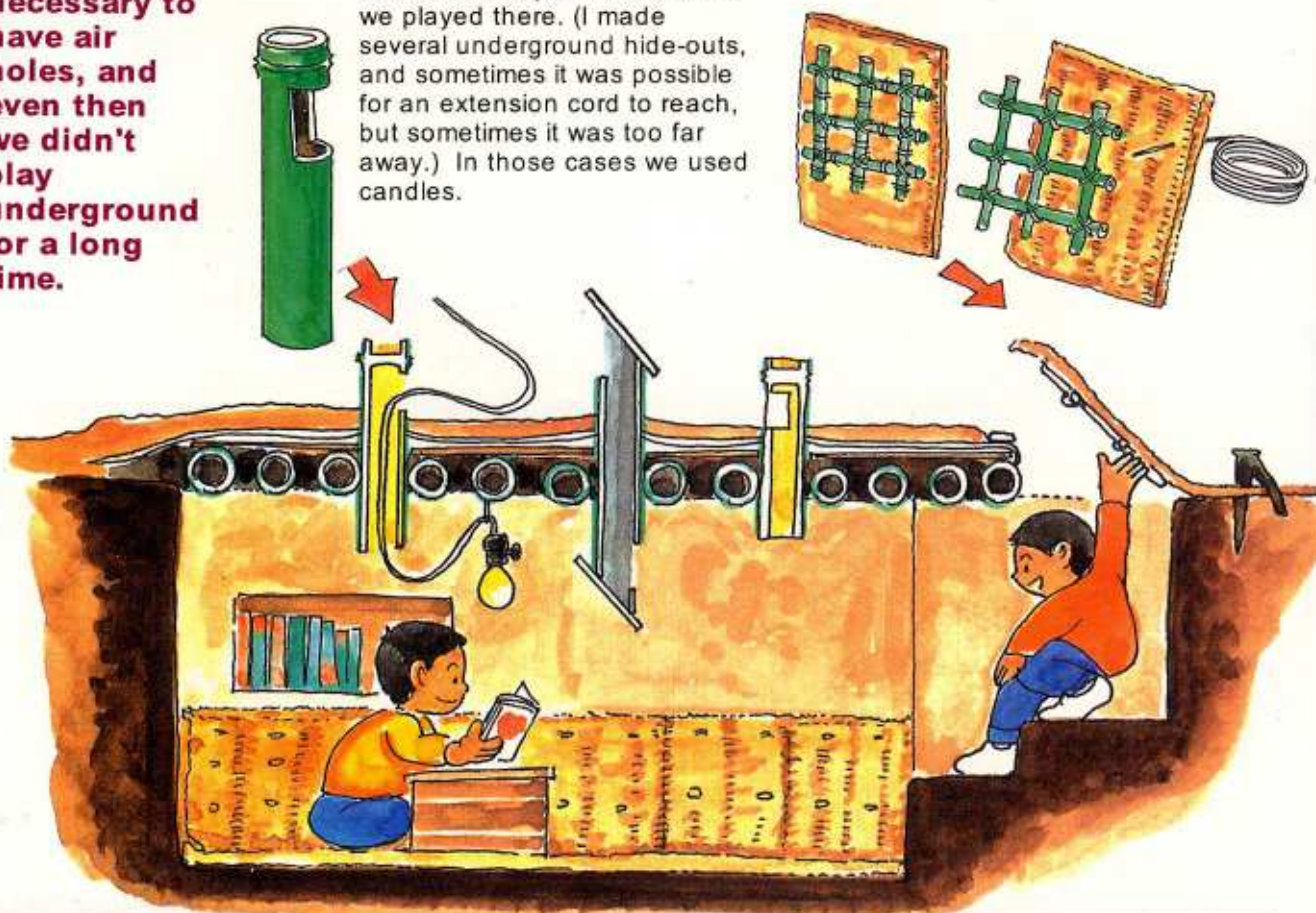


Camouflage it with grass, so nobody can find it.

It is absolutely necessary to have air holes, and even then we didn't play underground for a long time.

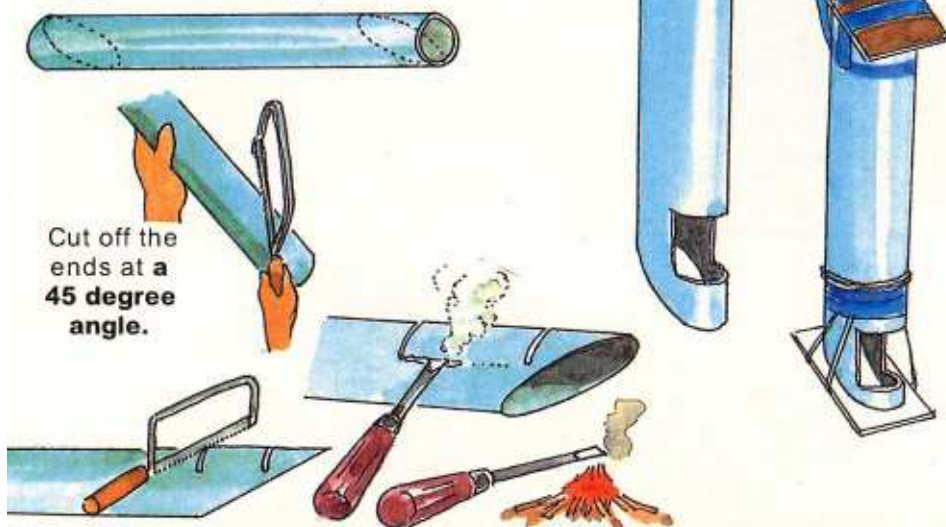
If it was near enough to use an extension cord or cord drum, we would do that just for the times we played there. (I made several underground hide-outs, and sometimes it was possible for an extension cord to reach, but sometimes it was too far away.) In those cases we used candles.

The entrance **hatch** is made of bamboo and straw matting.



SEN-BOH-KYO (Periscope)

Use a plastic pipe such as those used for agricultural water pipes.



Put in mirrors at top and bottom. We found mirrors in the rubbish. With a glass cutter cut it to the right shape. If you don't have a glass cutter you can try putting the mirror into water, and cutting it with scissors. I did this many times, but failed quite a few times. But you can usually get it to a usable size. As it doesn't have a lens, you can only see a little bit at a time. The shorter the pipe, the better you can see.

However you can tell when someone is approaching. I remember making several periscopes. For games like "kick the can" and hide and seek we also used them.

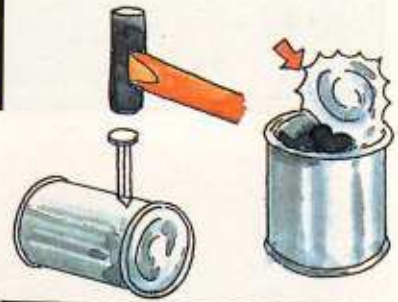
My "underground hide-outs" were sometimes found by my father, and I was forced to fill it in again, but I still made more. What was fun about this was that it was an extension of bomb shelter games. At the back of our village was a hill with several bomb shelters which had been dug out about the time of the Pacific war. With my friends we would often take candles and play there. But there was something scary about them and we seldom played there alone. I think that is why we wanted our own underground space, near home.

A-KI-KAN-POK-KU-RI

(Empty Can Clogs)



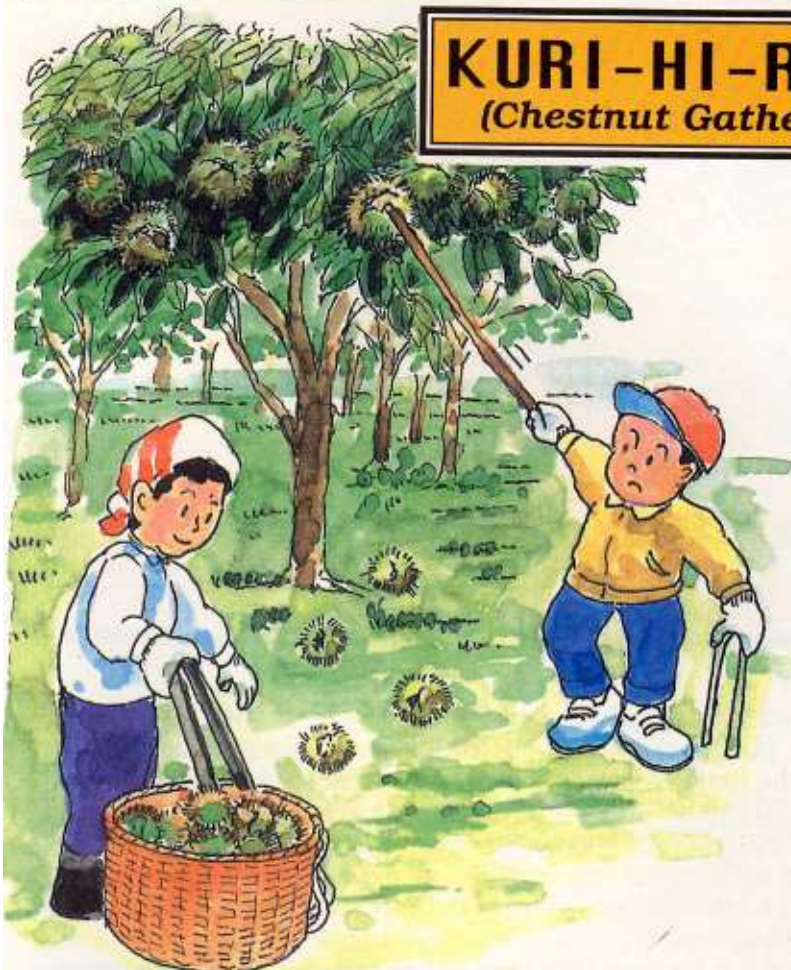
Cut off the remaining lid (top) of cans.



Make holes with a nail at both ends near the bottom.



Get wire through the holes to make hoops for pulling ropes. Attach ropes of suitable length.



KURI-HI-RO-I

(Chestnut Gathering)

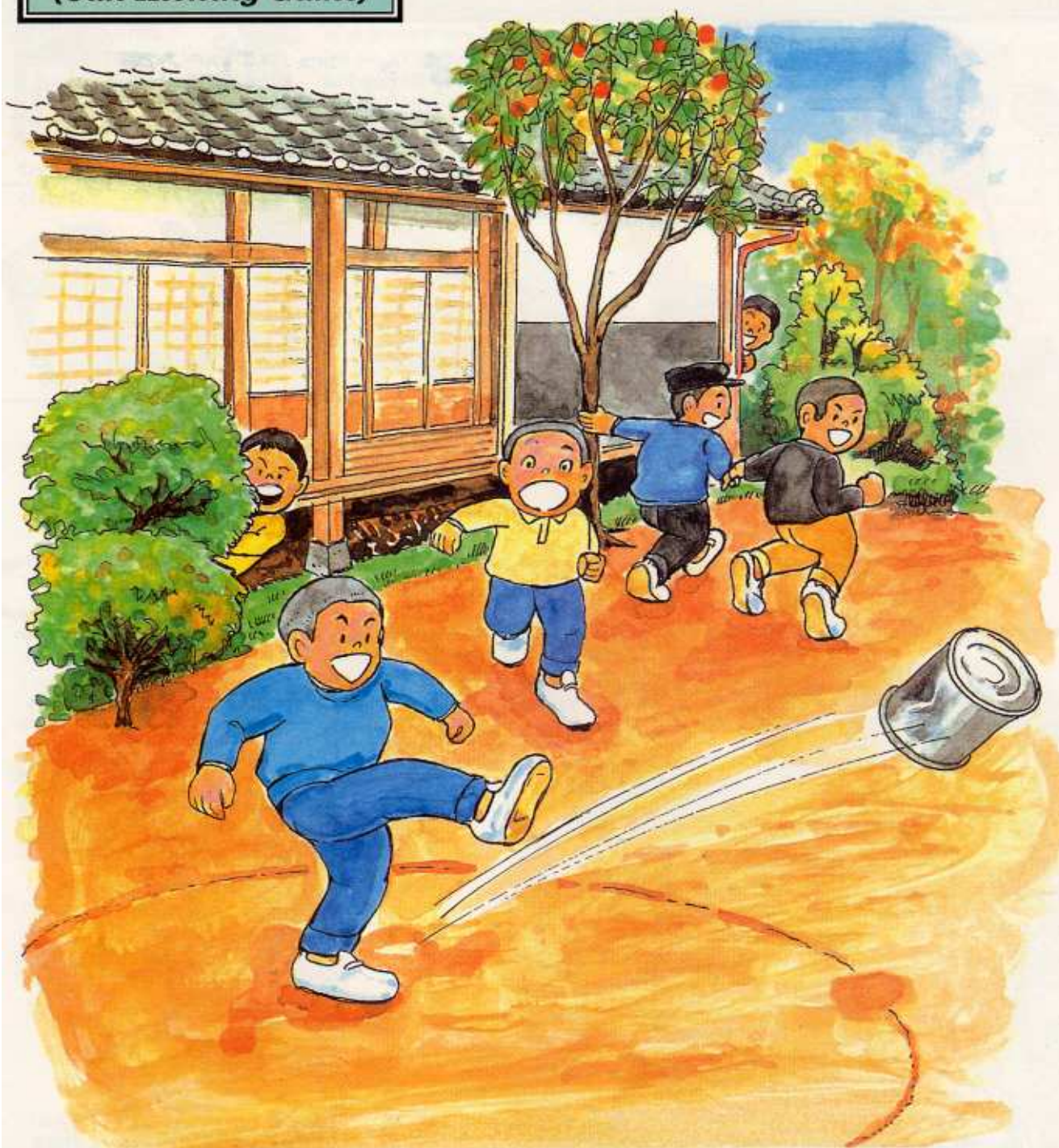
When you take off burrs, it's better with rubber boots on.



My family owned a few hills of chestnut trees. In autumn, when burrs started to open up, we gathered the chestnuts in baskets.

Back home at the yard we took off burrs and sent them to markets.

KA-N-KE-RI (Can Kicking Game)



Kahhnn! Kick-off!

Several boys got together and often started the can kicking game. It makes me wonder why we so often played the game. It didn't need complicate rules or sophisticated techniques. The point was the first "ONI" ("it" a sort of victim character of the game) had to serve as "ONI" quite a long time. So I think it might have been a kind of teasing or bullying game. There was no particular target of bullying, but someone had to be picked on. If another person became "ONI", everyone gave up easily. But the "victim" of the day became "ONI" and everyone hid very hard and try to help each other to keep "him" ONI forever! The worst case was one "ONI" who served for hours and ended up crying.

I, myself, sometimes became the victim, so I guess, that was just the way it was. Next time, another person was picked on and I joined in the teasing group. This game had no seniors or juniors with the same rules for all kids either strong or weak. So we could vent our anger openly. Also the pleasure of kicking off the can with all our might would be the best part of the game.

Rules of Can Kicking Game

The first "ONI" is the one who loses in jan-ken (scissors-paper-stone) game. Draw a circle of 4 meters in diameter and put a can in the center. The game is started with a kick-off by someone other than "ONI".



While the "ONI" goes and finds the can, everyone hides away. The "ONI" puts the can in the center again and goes out of circle.



The "ONI" tries to find everyone. At the beginning the "ONI" has no prisoners, so he must dare to find someone. But if he goes too far, someone might kick the can and make the game start again. Be careful of the can.

If the "ONI" finds someone, even a part such as a foot, a hand, or clothing, he should call his name (or nickname) exactly, which means the "ONI" has discovered him. Kids sometimes exchange caps or clothing to confuse the "ONI".



After calling the name, the "ONI" returns quickly to the circle and steps on the can and wins one. If he names wrongly and steps on the can, someone kicks the can and starts it over again. The "ONI" can correct naming before kicking the can.

The discovered kids are prisoned to a tree beside the circle, hand in hand. When the "ONI" finds everyone, the game is over, and the first one discovered will be the next "ONI".



Actually the game doesn't end so smoothly. Someone always appears from somewhere and kicks the can. Prisoners also confuse the "ONI" by pretending to talk to hidden friends, but in a completely different places from where they really are. The "ONI" only believes in himself and tries to search them out. But someone sneaks in from behind and KAHHHN!!



Everyone runs away and after all his efforts the poor "ONI" has to start again! It's hard to look at him picking up the can in disappointment.

ANA-I-RE (Rolling Ball into Dents)

This game is played with a soft tennis ball. Make as many holes as the number of members. Holes are made shallow and close together. Draw a starting line for rolling, 2 meters away from the holes, and draw boundary lines, too.



Play janken (scissors-paper-stone) to decide the players order, then, in that order, choose your hole.



Roll a ball towards the holes. Three tries without getting in is "1 loss", and it's the turn of the next player. The other players must have some part of their body inside the boundary lines.



Wait until the ball is still. When it stays in a hole, the owner of the hole catches the ball quickly, and the other players should run away because he throws it at them!



If a player is hit without rebound, he gets "1 loss". Even a part of body or clothing would be recognized as "1 loss" if a third person agrees it happened. If he catches the thrown ball directly, the pitcher gets "1 loss". If he fails to catch, he gets "1 loss". Success in catching erases "1 loss". If the pitcher cannot hit anybody, he gets "1 loss".



The number of losses is counted with **the buttons of school uniforms undone one by one** ! The players not in uniform draw the losses on the ground. Five is the maximum number of losses. The player with 5 losses withdraws from the game, flattens his hole (lightly since he can come back next session) and waits for "punishment".

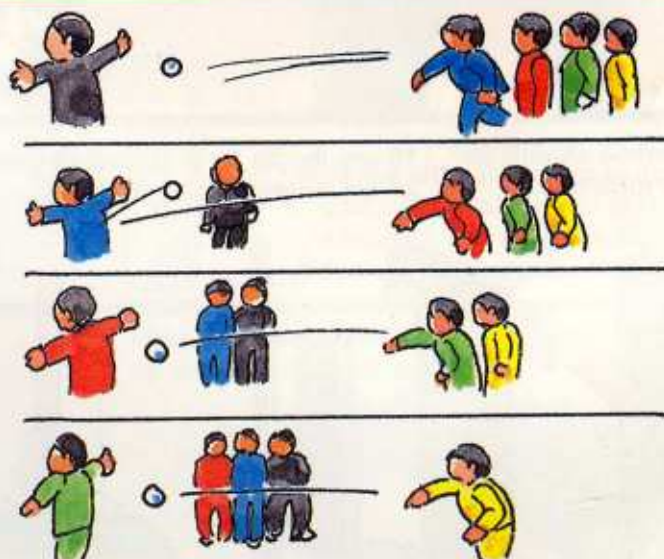


Other losses:

- 1 Since the holes are close together and shallow, it is not easy to guess in which hole the ball finally gets in. If you run away and the ball doesn't get in any hole, you get one loss.
- 2 Successful catch of the ball erases 1 loss and makes 1 saving if you have no losses.
- 3 Good pitchers choose the holes which are likely to receive the ball, and aim at their own holes. Others should do the opposite.
- 4 Players with 5 losses should retire one by one and the last person left is the winner.

Punishment (Death Penalty)

Punishment is the final ceremony of the game. The first loser is hit with a ball 5 meters away by the others. The second one is hit by all, except by the first, etc. It is not too painful but it is quite humiliating. The winner can throw at all the other players. After this ceremony the game starts again by choosing the holes.



TAKE-TO-N-BO (Bamboo Helicopter)

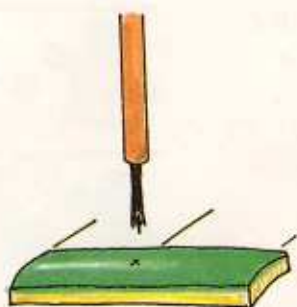
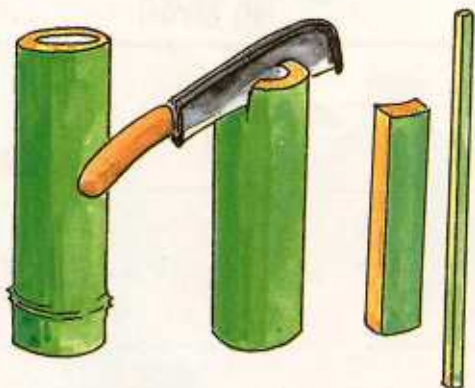


It was too simple a craft work for the boys in those days and we didn't make it so often. In the beginning it was fun though.

The bamboo should be a rather thick one.

15 cm length for a propeller blade.
20 cm length for a center stick.

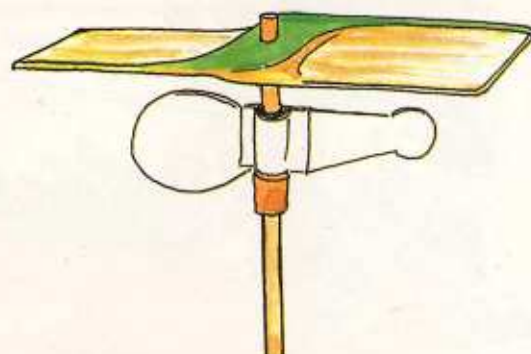
Make a hole right in the middle of propeller blade from outer side with a gimlet.



Cut a center stick to be tightly inserted into the hole.

Cut the propeller blade, with both halves facing opposite directions.

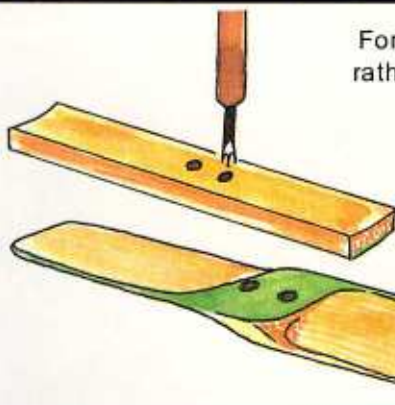
Make both ends round for safety.



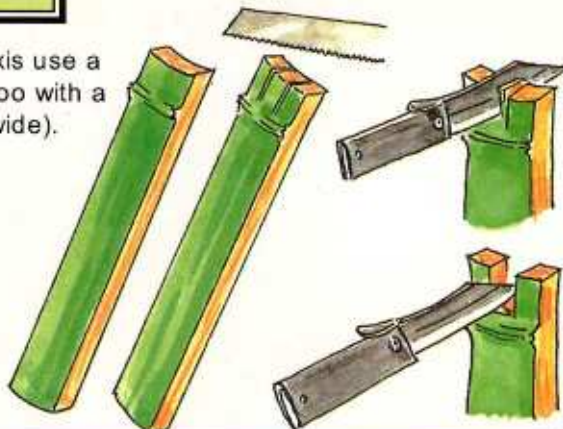
I attached a piece of paper cut into a helicopter shape, and tried other experiments.

TAKE-TO-N-BO (*Bamboo Helicopter II*) (Only The Propeller Blade Flies Away)

Make 2 holes 1 cm apart in the middle of the propeller blade and carve both sides.

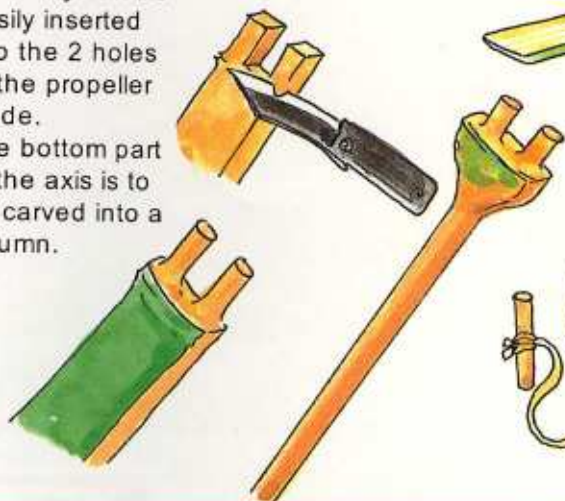


For a revolving axis use a rather thick bamboo with a joint (14 mm wide).

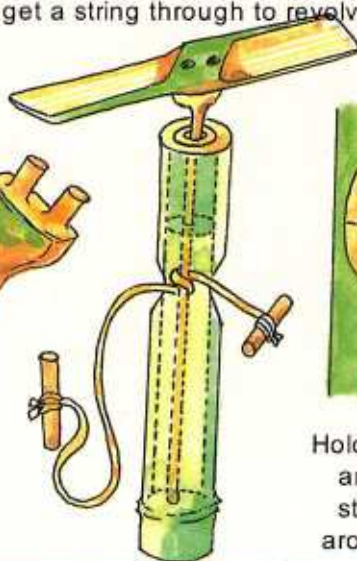


Make notches 6-7 mm apart with a saw, and cut out the center part with a knife.

Carve out the protruding parts of the axis so that they can be easily inserted into the 2 holes of the propeller blade. The bottom part of the axis is to be carved into a column.



Find an appropriate size of a bamboo tube to secure the axis, and make 2 holes to get a string through to revolve the axis.



Hold the tube and string in one hand and pull the other end of the string strongly. The propeller blade turns around and flies away from the axis.

PARACHUTING

Cut a plastic bag into an umbrella shape.



Sew on 10 threads of the same length.

Attach a weight. Too light a weight doesn't open the parachute and too heavy one brings it down too soon.

Wrap the weight with the parachute and throw it up as high as possible.



It opens up and comes down slowly. It was a simple game, but I made it quite often, maybe influenced by war movies in those days.

BU-U-ME-RA-N

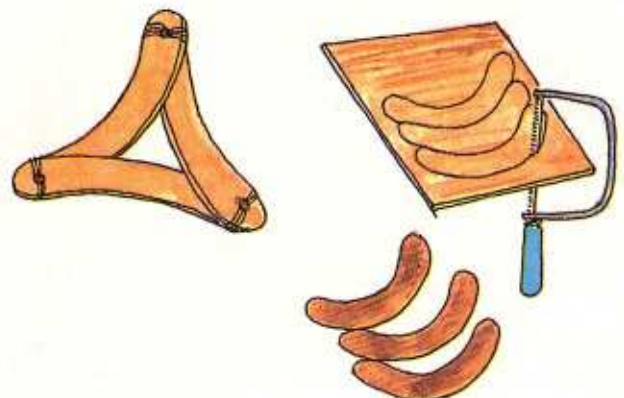
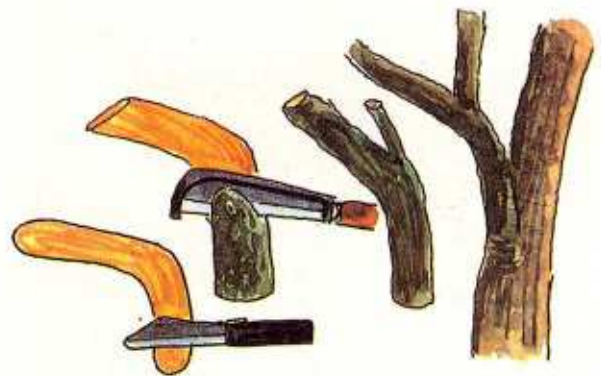
(BOOMERANG)



Throwing, revolving around quickly, and returning to you---That is "boomerang".

Actually it didn't come back as I expected. I made various experiments. Boys magazines those days didn't mention the exact angle etc. Repeated attempts turned out in vain. Maybe the key to success is how to throw it, I thought, and I tried and tried. And with all the efforts, some tries brought back the boomerang. I wanted to show my skill. In front of my friends, I threw it and it happened to come back to my feet! Cheers!

Sometimes it went away far into the hill and then everyone made fun of me. Still I tried another style. My ideal image was the flying boomerang catching a persimmon and returning to my hand. But even after so many attempts, **it never came back to my HAND.**



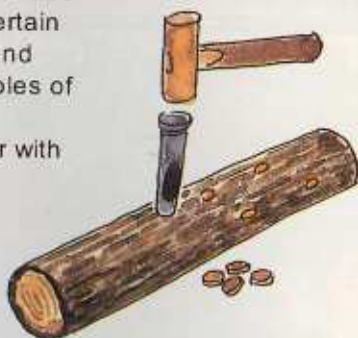
SHII-TAKE (Shiitake-mushroom)



My family had a shiitake-mushroom farm.

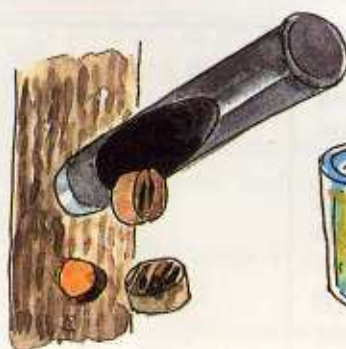
In season shiitake grew larger day by day. We cut and packed them to send to the markets.

Cut oak trees into a certain length and make holes of 1 cm in diameter with a metal punch.



The round barks of oak are punched out when hit successively.

My parents seemed to buy fungi cultured in sawdust, but before that they hammered in pegs with cultured fungi.



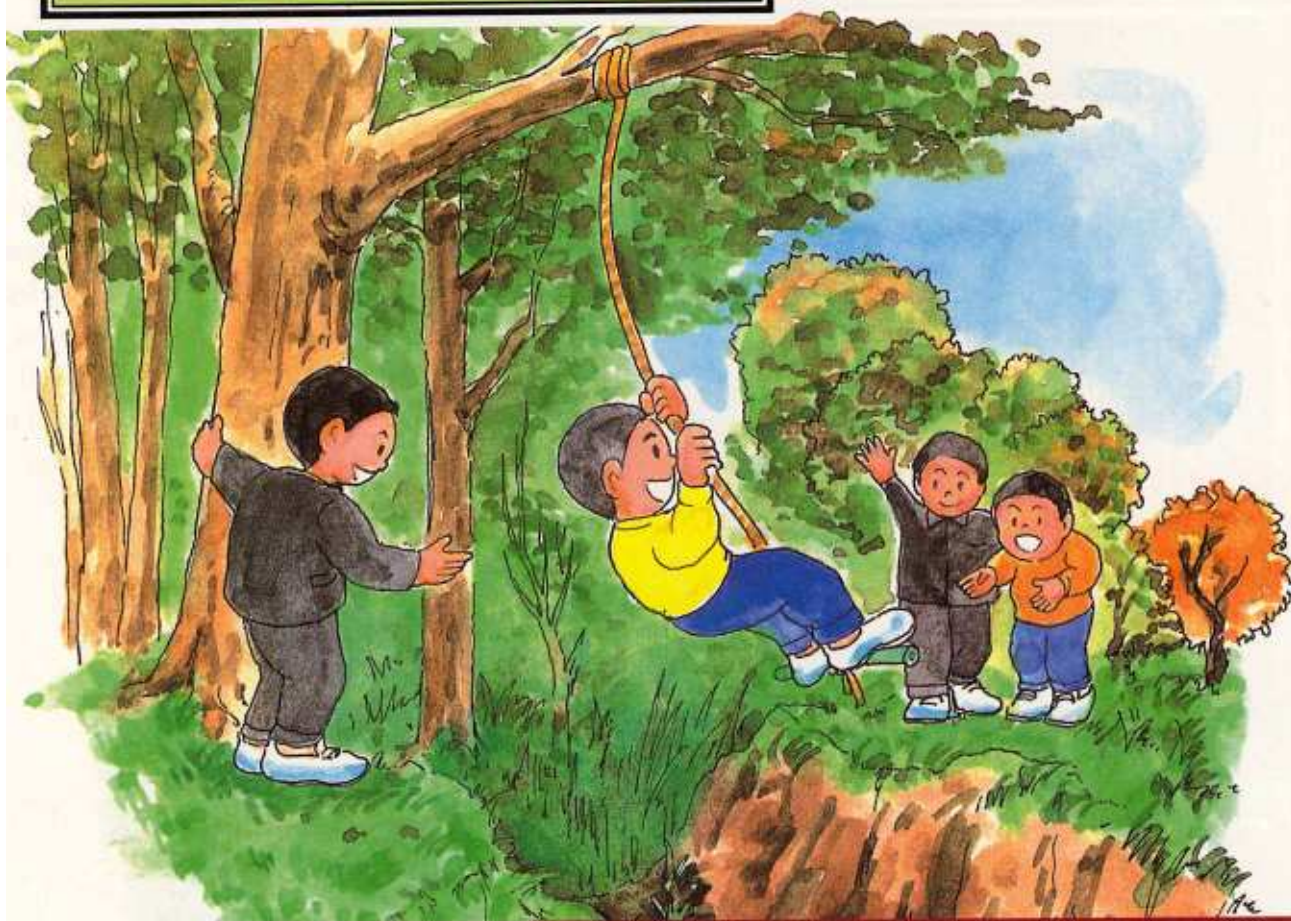
Put a pinch of sawdust with fungi into the holes.



Cap back the holes with the round barks and hammer them lightly. Stand the trees in shady places like in a cedar wood. My parents also grew shiitake in a greenhouse later on.



TA-A-ZA-N-GO-K-KO (Tarzan Make-Believe)



'Tarzan make-believe'

was one of the countless 'plays in the hill. We played a lot in hills from late autumn to winter, when there was no fear of mosquitoes and vipers, while we could enjoy plentiful fruits and nuts. Running around the hills and fields, we got comfortably warmed up and it was really a fun never to be stopped. One of the common plays was "Moving on tree-tops, Ninja style." We climbed up a tree and swayed it with our weight until we could reach and move onto the next tree. How far we could move 'without landing ?' We played in screams and shrieks.

In 'Tarzan make-believe' we hung a rope to a thrilling point and tried our courage. We jumped over with a war cry of Tarzan, "Ah-ah-ah."

When we found a good vine, we used it. We made natural 'field athletic courses' here and there.

SHI-I-NO-MI-HI-RO-I (Gathering Sweet Acorns)

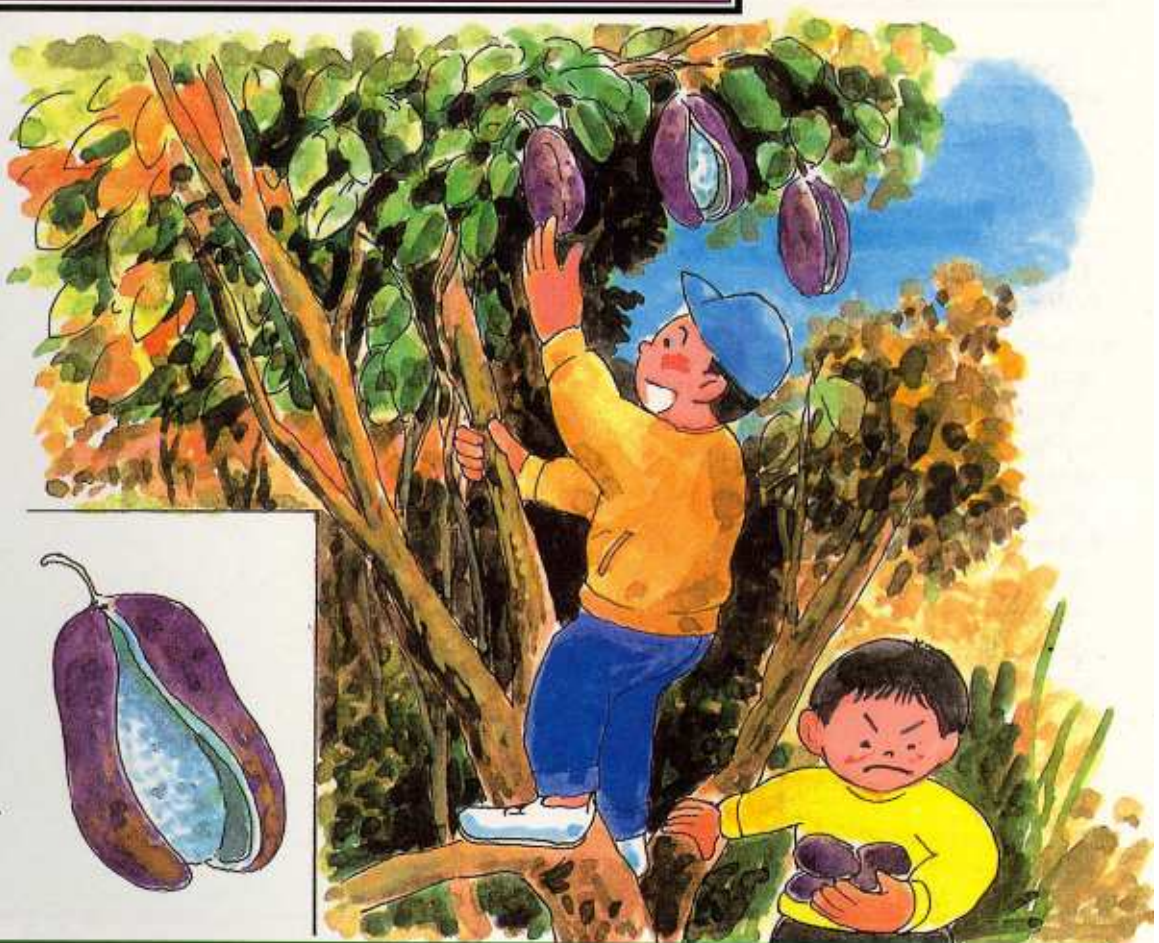


Another enjoyment of plays in hills was gathering sweet acorns. We found blackish brown nuts of soy-bean-size under big pasania trees. On lucky days we found 2--3 kg each. We cracked the shells in our mouths and ate the inside raw, or brought them home to roast in a frying pan. It smelled and tasted very good.



A-KE-BI-TO-RI (Akebi Gathering)

Akebi is a representative fruit in hills of autumn. It is a kind of vine plant. But I couldn't find one so easily in the hills of my hometown (village). It was a rather precious wild fruit of rare value. You were a lucky person if you could eat 3 or 4 fruits during the season.



So when we found some unripe akebi, we put our 'spit' on them. It was a symbolic action to insist that something belonged to you. And the place should be kept secret. When someone might come closer, you had to confess that you had found them and already put spit on them. He gave up. It is ready to eat when it turns reddish purple and has a little crack on the surface. We went to crop them only with the closest friends. Then we returned to the playground to show off proudly. "Where did you find them?" asked the boys enviously. "We can't tell you," we answered in a triumphant manner.

There was a fruit similar to Akebi, called **Mube**. Some family had a Mube tree, so it didn't attract boys in taste and rarity. Both Akebi and Mube had little meat actually, so sweet juice around seeds was the only good part.

We chewed the inside of the fruit and spat away the seeds. The hill in autumn is full of wonderful tastes.

Pomegranate

is another savor of autumn. I ate it often. It was not grown naturally.

It was usually planted in gardens, and I had one in my garden. I waited for the fruits getting ripe gradually.



We also had a pear tree in our garden. When the fruits got big enough, we covered them with paper and waited till they became ripe.



ME-JI-RO-O-TO-SHI (Japanese White-Eye Hunting)

Today the white-eye is one of the protected birds and hunting is regulated. When I was a child, however, keeping white-eyes was such a popular hobby that, from the smallest elementary school kids to adults, we had at least one in our house.



White-eye hunting; a good call bird, bait such as ripe persimmons or tangerine, water (a little), bird lime, a black sock...



Wear dark clothing so as not to be remarkable. Leave for a wood (of various trees) early in the morning in cold seasons with tools and a call bird, which should be covered with a cloth so that it would not chirp before setting.



We found many white-eyes in thick wood of various trees of different size, such as oaks and pasanias etc. Choose the place for setting the trap, cut a twig of your height and hang the nest of a call bird. Uncover the cloth after all the preparations are finished as quickly and silently as possible.



Cut a newly sprouting twig as a trap, and remove all the leaves except a few at the end. (To make birds believe it to be a real branch.)



Wet the twig with water so that the bird-lime can be separated easily. Keep the bird-lime in a small bottle such as a cosmetic container, with a little water at the bottom.



Knead and soften the bird-lime if it is too hard on chilly days.

Roll the twig and wind the bird-lime around it evenly.



Put a few twigs with bird-lime, as if they were natural branches, as high as you can easily reach. Set the baits near the twigs.



Uncover the cloth on the call bird. The call bird finds itself in the woods and starts chirping.

Hide in the place where you can see the trap and can immediately get to seize a trapped bird.



Attracted by the call bird, other white-eyes came near for either rescue or struggle over territory.

Hold your breath and wait patiently. Sometimes birds came soon. Other times we had to wait for more than one hour. You have to encourage the call bird when he is not a good singer by whistling. Using your tongue and upper teeth, whistle the sound "chi-i-yu."



Here comes a white-eye! The most thrilling moment. You have to be careful not to make a noise.



If you rush to catch the bird, it struggles in fright and get filthy.



The best catch is the moment when the bird swings down.



Take the birdlime off the legs of the bird. Keep the bird in a black sock to calm it down.



HAKO-TORI-KAGO (Bird Cage)

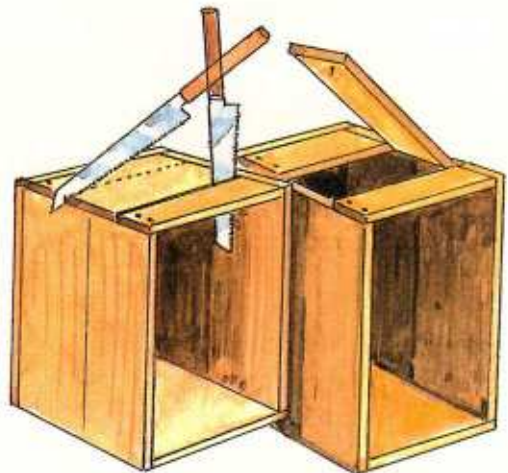
I asked for a wooden box for shipping apples at a grocery store, or made a box with wooden plates by myself.

Nail on some joints to strengthen the box.

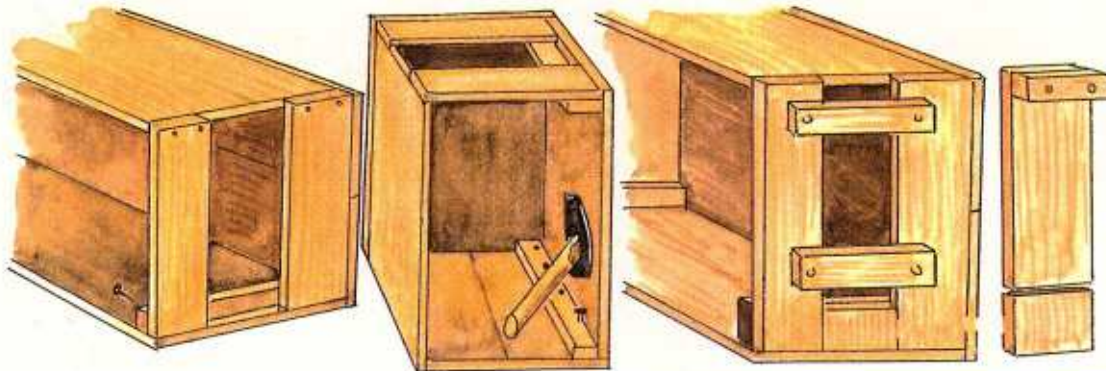


Make an exit.

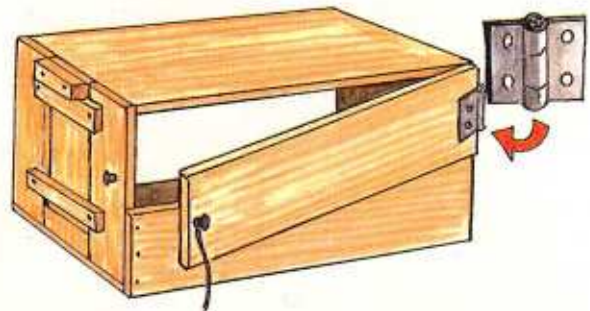
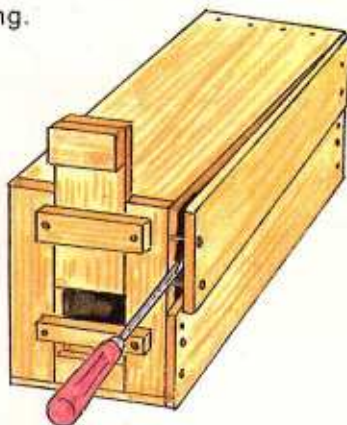
Saw off a wooden plate of 10 cm in width. Keep the cutout plate.



Make a sliding door for the exit using the cutout plate.



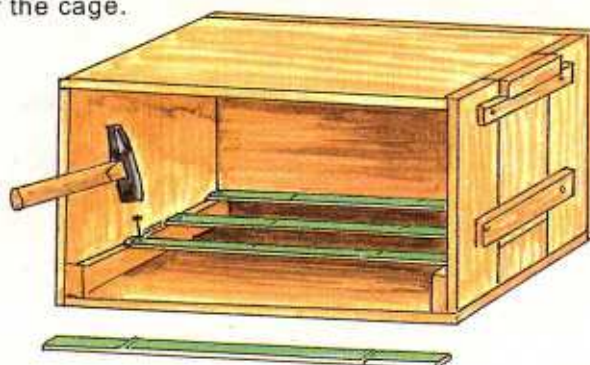
Make the plate at the back open for cleaning.



Open and close with a wire.

A leather belt hinge could do when I couldn't find a real one.

Nail several thin bamboo plates at the lower part of the cage.

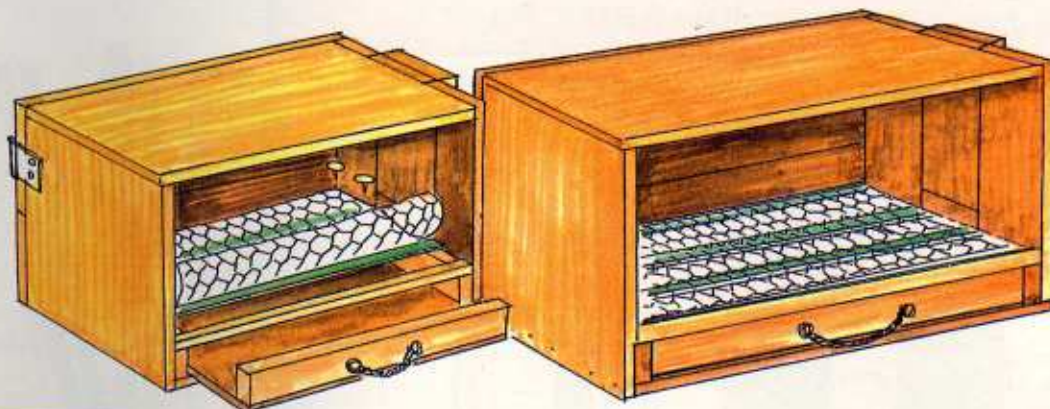


Make a drawer for droppings out of veneer plate under the bamboo bars.



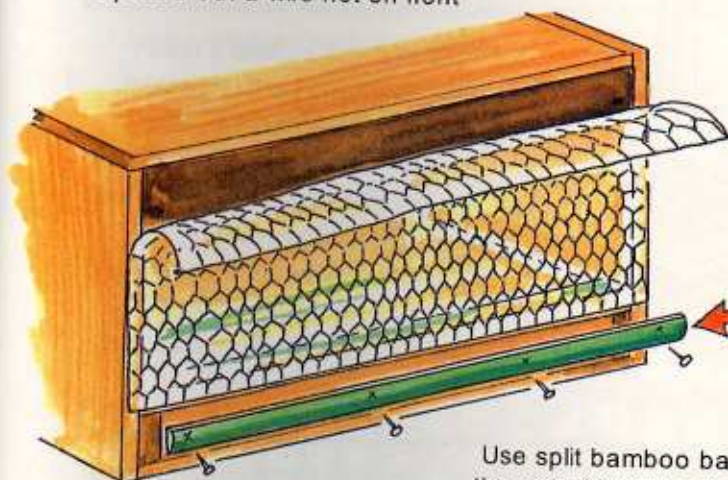
Spread out a **wire net** on the bamboo bars.

Bend over the excessive net so as not to damage a bird.

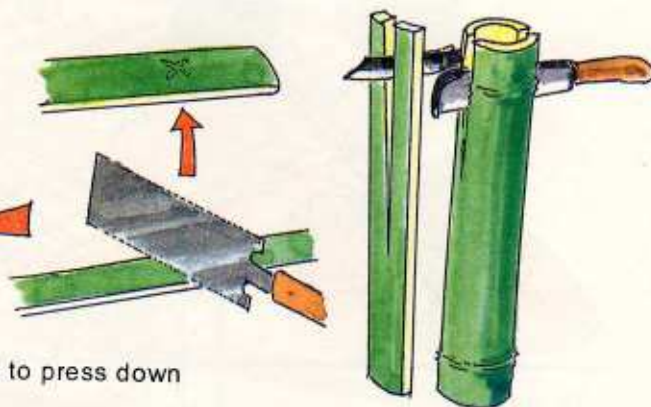


Spread out a wire net on front

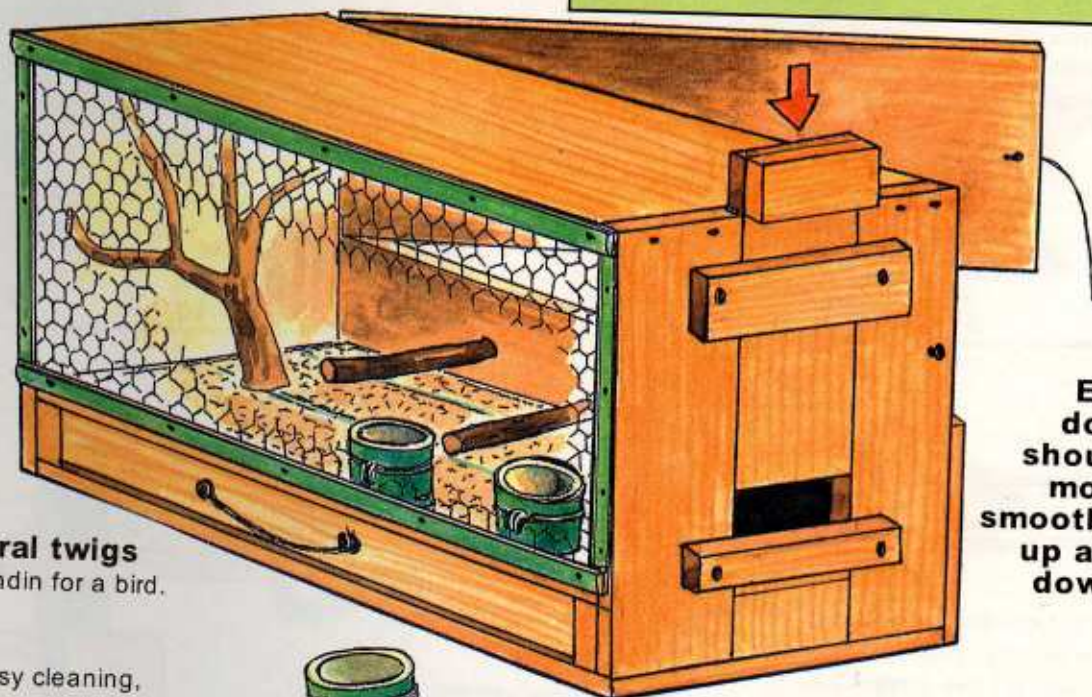
Make cross notches with a saw to keep the bamboo split while nailing.



Use split bamboo bars to press down the net with tiny nails.



When you want a bird to get in or out for cleaning etc., move it to another cage with two exits set side by side.



Put **natural twigs** such as nandin for a bird.

For an easy cleaning, cover the drawer for droppings with newspaper.



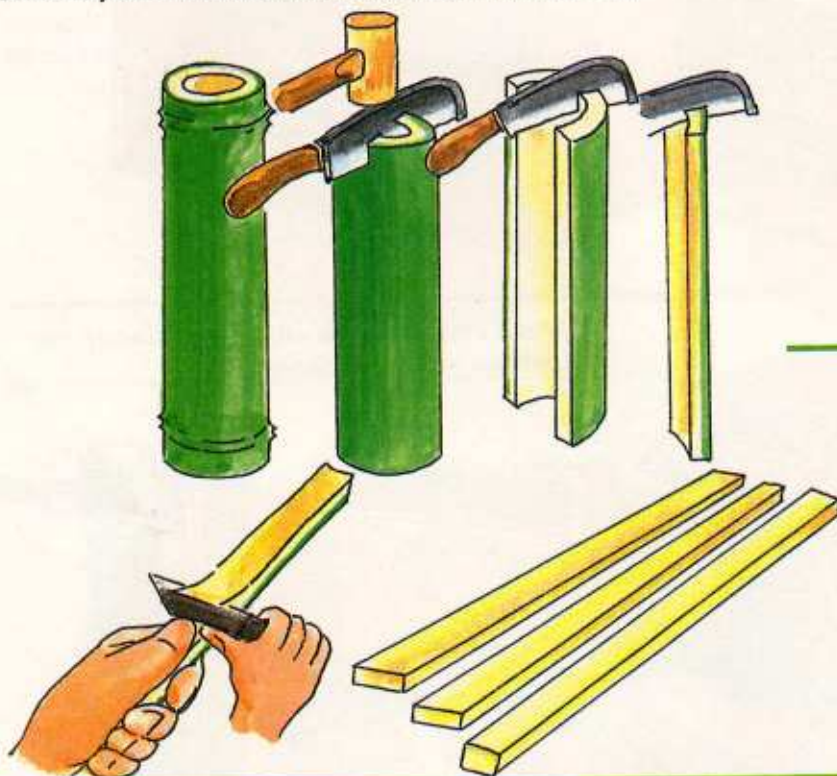
Bamboo cups for water and food.
(Get them in and out from the back doors.)

Exit door should move smoothly up and down.

TAKE-TORI-KAGO-TSUKURI

(Making A Bamboo Bird Cage)

Use a Moso-bamboo of 1-2 years old, or older, which is hard enough.
Use a dry one instead of one cut fresh from a bush.

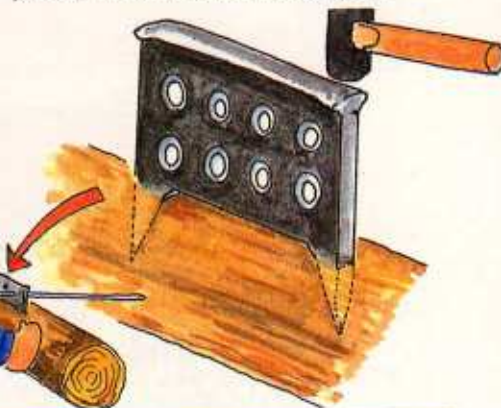


When I was a child a ready-made bamboo bird cage cost about 500--600 yen, too expensive for a child allowances. We got together and struggled to make them by ourselves. We joined pocket money to buy a bamboo-strip maker. Making bamboo strips took time and much labor.

To cut a strip, fix a knife and pull a bamboo. Make it thin enough to get through a bamboo-strip maker.



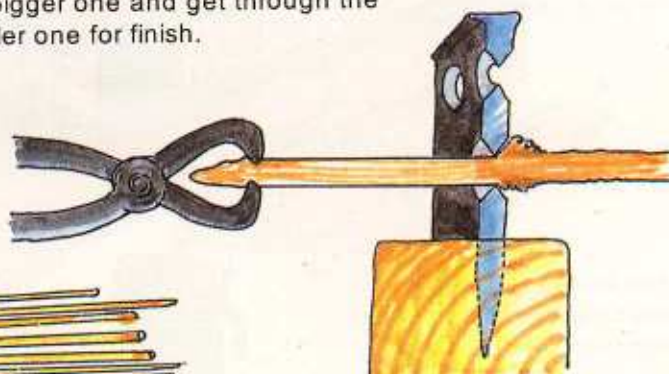
Get the tip of bamboo through a bamboo-strip maker, and pull it through the hole with a cutting pliers. It sure needs strength.



The holes are of 2 sizes. Start with the bigger one and get through the smaller one for finish.

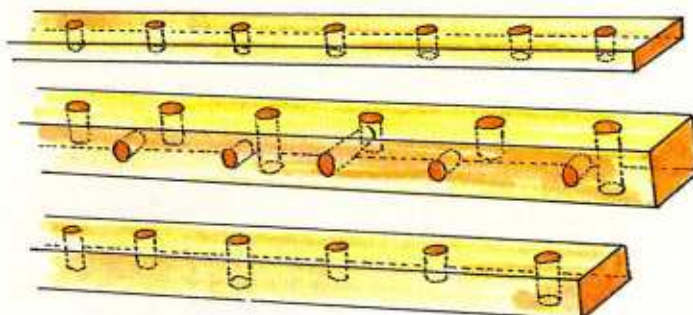
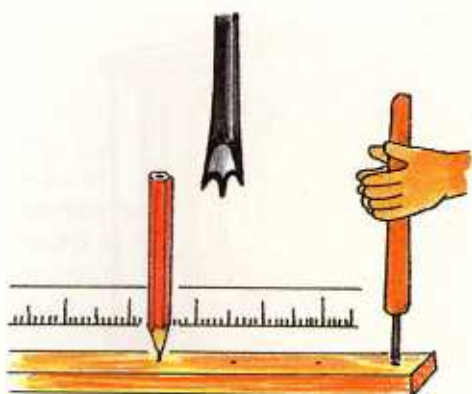


To cut bamboo strips to the same length, press a knife on a strip and roll the strip.

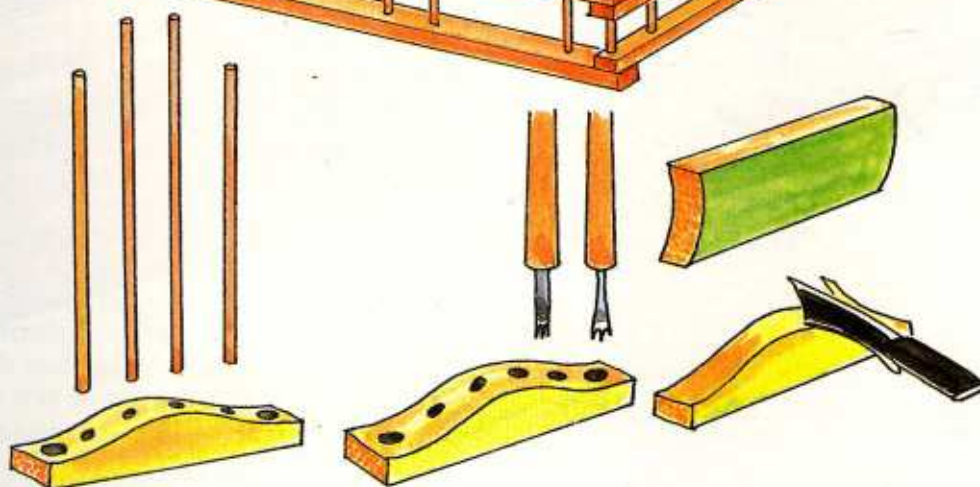
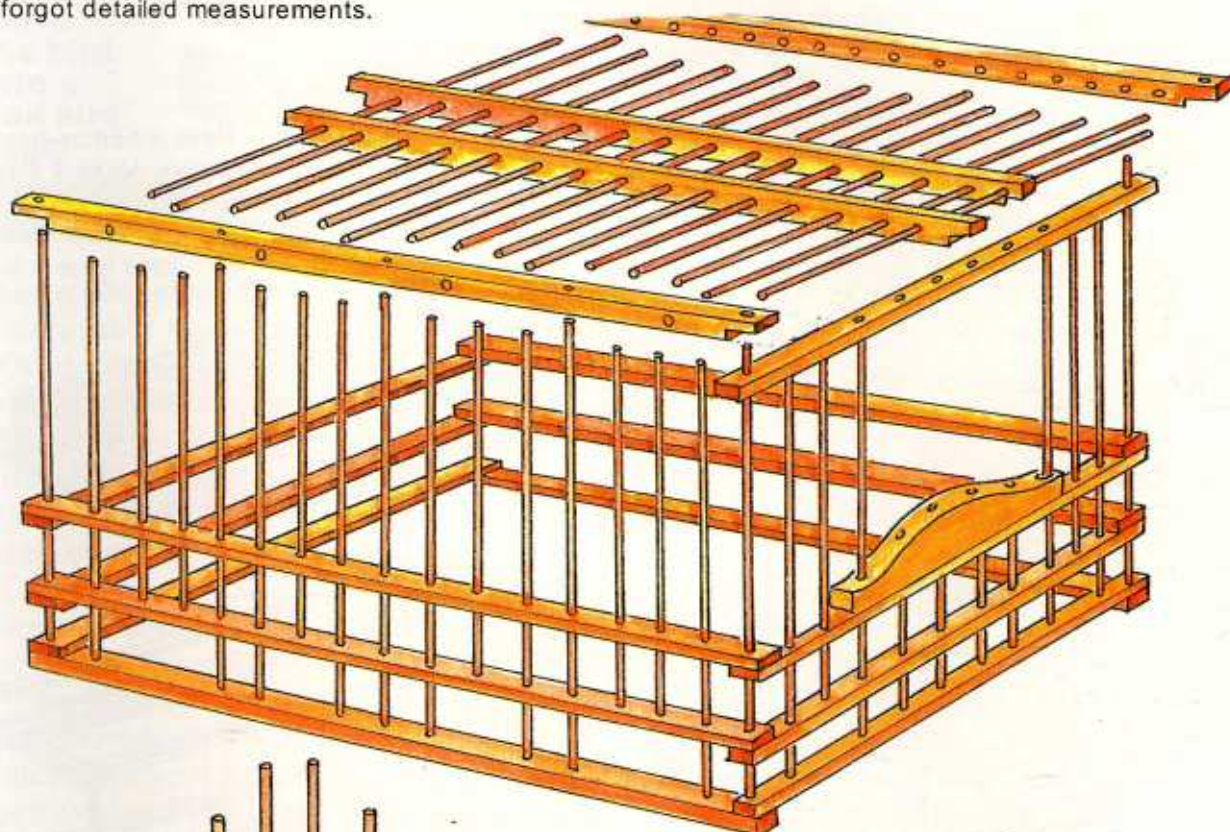


Measure precisely for the holes of each strip.
Make holes with a sharp carving knife.

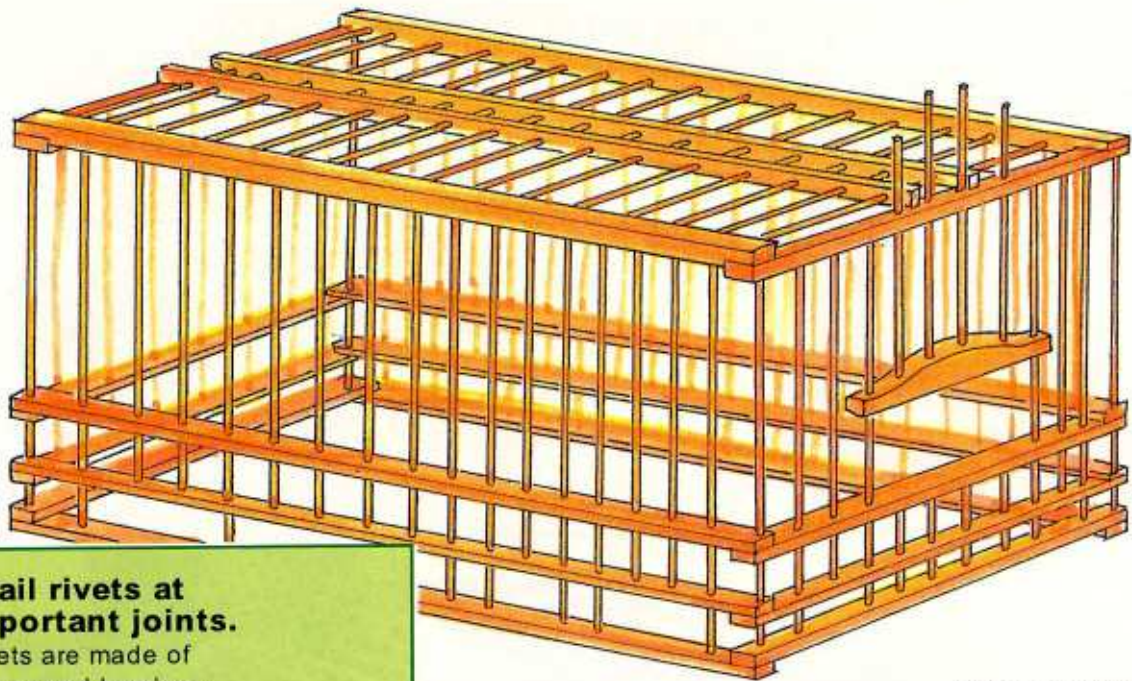
Some holes get through, others don't.



I forgot detailed measurements.

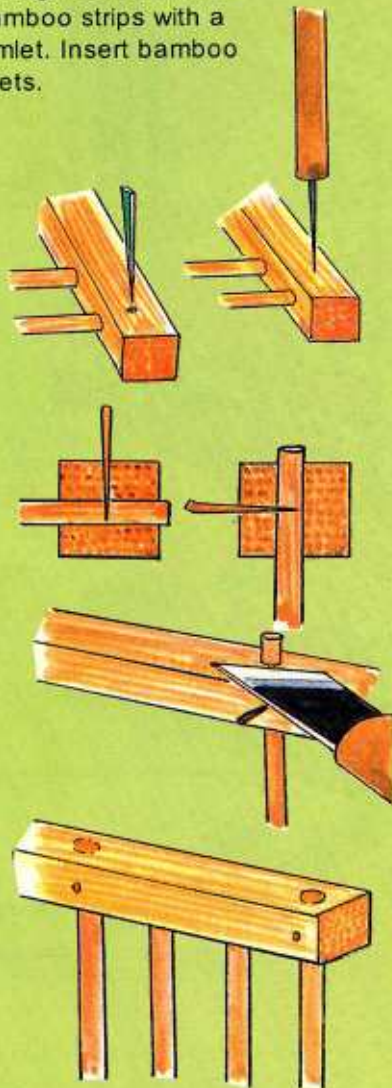


To make an exit part slide up and down easily,
the holes at both ends should be a little larger.



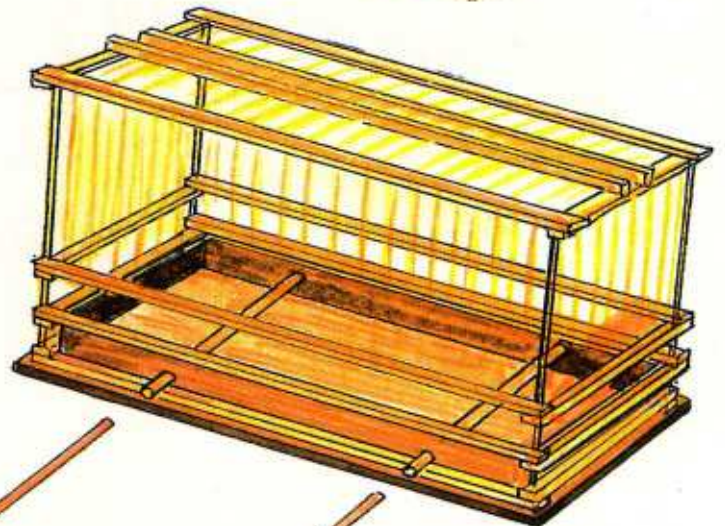
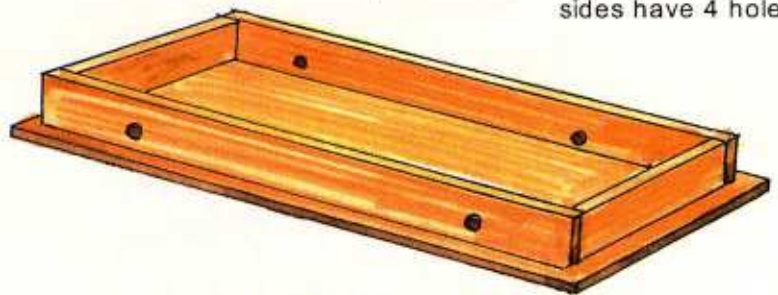
Nail rivets at important joints.

Rivets are made of sharpened bamboo. Make holes deep enough to reach the bamboo strips with a gimlet. Insert bamboo rivets.



Protruding bamboo strips or excessive rivets should be cut off.

Make a bottom tray with cryptomeria plates. Make 4 sides to be exactly inserted into the inner part of the bamboo frame. The tray sides have 4 holes.



Get bamboo strips through the holes to make the upper part and the bottom joined securely. Now you are ready to put a bird in! When cleaning, put the cage on the floor and take off the bottom tray quickly so as not to let the bird fly away.

ME-JI-RO-KA-I (Keeping A White-Eye)

Put the cups of **water** and **food** in a bamboo cage.

At night and on cold days, move the bird into a box bird cage.



Nandin is good for a perch. Cut nandin a little longer than the width of the cage. Make notches at both ends so it supports itself at any height.

Making food for a white-eye

Get a chickweed in a field.

Peel a baked **sweet potato**.

Grind a chickweed well in a mortar, add sweet potato and mix them well.

Put spoonfuls of food into a cup. I made with cabbage and other green weeds in place of chickweed, but I added sweet potato every time.

I always kept a couple of sweet potatoes baked at the bath or the kitchen furnace, and later cooled.

When I felt it troublesome to make food, I bought ready-made food.

Other foods were green weeds, tangerines, ripen astringent persimmons etc.

Change water once or twice every day. In summer a bird took a bath when I put a larger container filled with water.



chickweed + the inside of a baked sweet potato.

Add a little water when it's not soft enough.



ready-made food

You only add water and mix well.

some other.

half cut mandarin orange.



vegetable greens.

We kept other birds such as a **Japanese Bunting** and **Society Finch**.

These birds laid eggs and hatched them, which was an excitement.



For Japanese Buntings or Society Finches we made nests with a rope wound and sewed with a cotton thread.



I enjoyed raising them from little chicks, feeding them food with a toothpick or catching worms for them etc. Later some flew a half way, or I let them go away at the end.

U-SA-GI-GA-RI (Hare Hunting)



I haven't understood the meaning of a well-known Japanese folk song, "Native village", in which the lyric goes, "That mountain where we drove hares..." until I got quite old. When I was 20 years old or so and was thinking of my native town, I suddenly remembered **"hare hunting"** held annually at the junior high school. In my memory it was done in late autumn with all the students attending. (Those days there were two junior high schools in Mikawa, and my school had 400 - 500 students. Now only one school remains because of depopulation.)

We looked forward to it though it was held only once or twice a year. There were no classes on that day. All the students in gymnastic uniforms carried the tools and headed for the hill under the command of teachers and senior students. Seniors carried nets from the store room and juniors had "driving-out bamboos" to make big slapping noise.

The net was stretched as wide as dozens of meters on a hill. All the students made a long line parallel to the net hundreds of meters away from it. With a signal by teachers, we moved forward making noise and yelling loudly toward the net. It was like a marching of infantry (foot soldiers) in feudal times. The big roar on a hill lasted a quarter of an hour or so. The line of people reached the net. Whether there was a catch or not, I was not sure. Then we moved to another place and did it again.

When all the students returned school quite tired, the lunch of mixed rice with meat was ready. Seniors said the meat was hare meat. I wondered if it was true. Was there enough time to cook the meat? Was there enough catch to serve all the students? Still I half believed the story and ate it when I was a first-grader.

GI-N-NA-N-HIRO-I (Ginkgo Nut Gathering)

At the ground of our elementary school there were dozens of ginkgo trees. The bigger one was as thick as three of us surrounding it hand in hand. Late autumn lots of ginkgo fruits fell down. They smelled bad when smashed, but the nuts inside tasted good. Some dealers bought the gathered nuts from us at quite a good price. So we collected them hard and sold to dealers. The school bought books and other equipments with the income.



KI-NO-MI-A-SO-BI

(Plays With Nuts)

In autumn we enjoyed various plays with nuts. Here are a few of them I remember playing quite often.

Sticking ginkgo nuts:

I had many ginkgo nuts stick to my face.

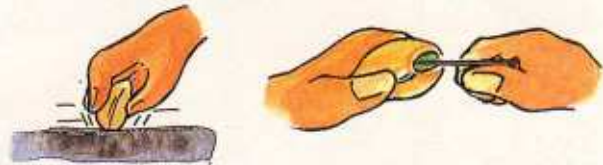
If you have one on the forehead, you prove to be very good at it. But if you have them too long, you'll have traces left.



Ginkgo nuts Take a nut out of a fruit.



Rub the nut on a stone or cement to make a hole.



Take out the meat of the nut with a nail or bamboo pick. (Empty cleanly)

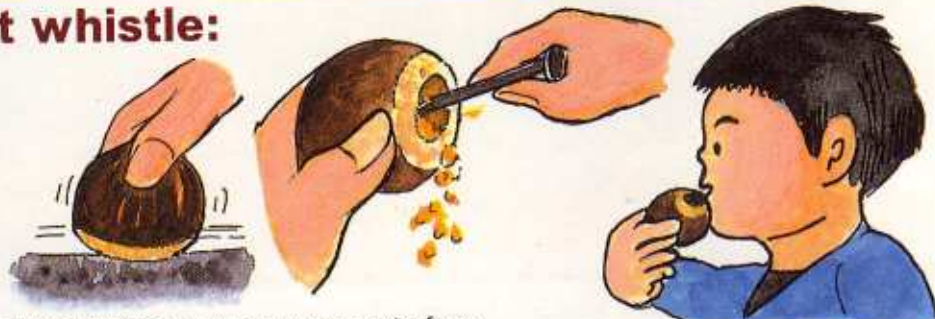


Quickly move the nut to anywhere on your face to let it stick to.



Breathe in from the hole of a nut.

Horse-chestnut whistle:

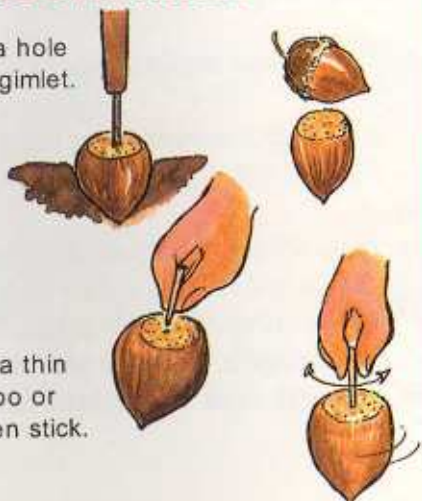


Rub a nut on a stone or concrete face. Remove the inside. Not so easy.

It whistles "ho-ho."

Spinning top of acorn nuts:

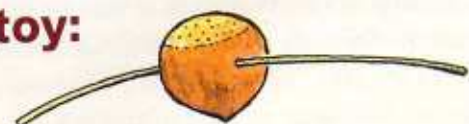
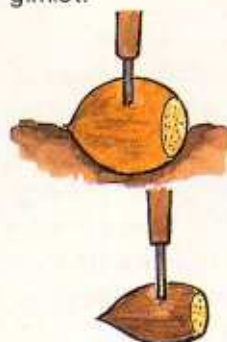
Make a hole with a gimlet.



Insert a thin bamboo or wooden stick.

Balancing toy:

Make a hole through a acorn with a gimlet.

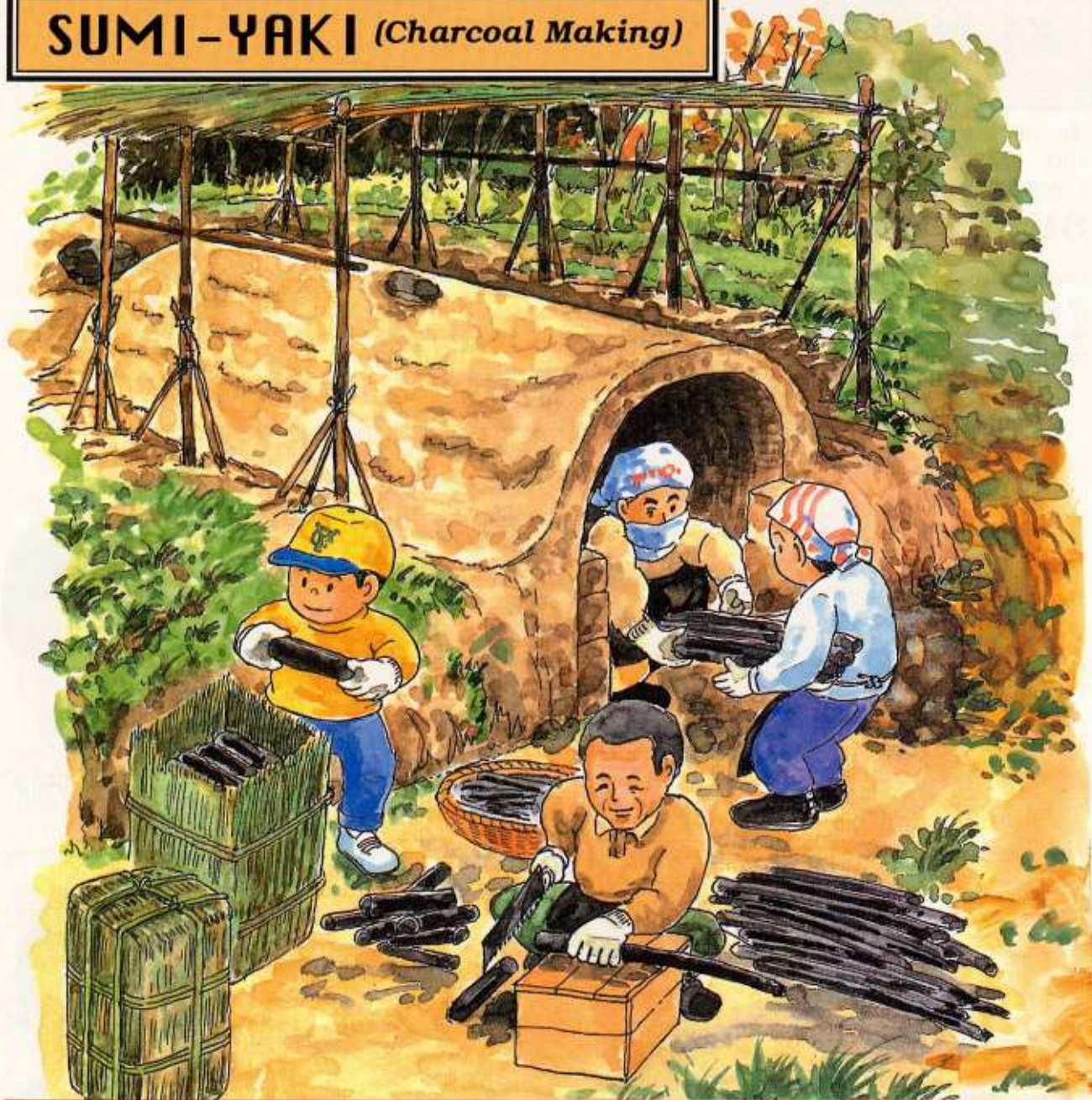


Put through a thin bamboo stick, the acorn in the middle.



Insert two acorns of similar size to both ends.

SUMI-YAKI (Charcoal Making)



"SUMIYAKI", charcoal making begins when winter is near at hand. Charcoal was important not only for warmers, such as foot warmers or braziers, but also for cooking, such as portable clay cooking stoves. My family were making charcoal for sale, and also for our own use, when a gas system was not available at that time.

First the woods of oak, pasania or camellia were taken out from the hills and were cut to about one meter lengths. How to make charcoal is shown in the following page as playing at making, but it is almost the same as actual making.

There was a charcoal kiln in our garden and I have a memory of the white smoke always climbing up to the sky.

One day, a touring movie show was planned in our garden, but the entertainer thought the garden had smoke which interfered with the clearness of the screen. Finally, the place to hold the show changed to another family's garden, upon which I cried very much.

This picture shows the scene when a fire inside a kiln is completely extinguished and charcoal has just been made. The charcoal is cut to about thirty cm length and packed in miscanthus grass and delivered. Hills became bold and are planted with cedars. The kiln is destroyed.

When the opening was opened, I was a little excited wondering whether it would be well done or not. I always asked to be allowed to open the opening. Bad charcoal, such as the insufficiently burned or the broken pieces were used for our home.

SUMI-YA-KI-GO-KKO (Playing Charcoal Making)

Cut logs of a slightly shorter length than the depth of the hole.

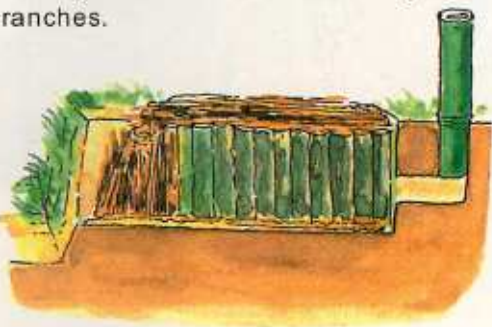


Make the kiln in a place where there is no possibility of a fire, such as the bank of a river.



Make a chimney.

The logs should be sandwiched by dead branches.



Cover them with straw like a semi cylindrical shaped house. Further cover with clay.

Beat the clay tightly.



Make the opening for ignition.



Make a fire of the dead branches and fan by hand until the fire enters into the inner parts.

It really takes a day to complete all this work.

White smoke rising up from the chimney means that the fire is spreading to the inner parts.



The opening should be gradually narrowed with the smoke color changing.



The opening should be completely closed when the smoke color changes to violet and when near the chimney the smoke is transparent.



Finally, the chimney should be closed.

Cool by water mixed with clay, if the kiln is still hot after a night has passed.



After confirmation that it is completely extinguished, take out the charcoal just finished. If any fire still exist, the charcoal begins to burn again because of the supply of oxygen. You must be extremely cautious in opening the opening.



Actual charcoal making needs a week till closing and three to four days till opening the kiln.



Charcoal in the front part is excessively burned and in the back part insufficiently. The ones in the center part are well done. The same is true for actual making. There is always a semi cylindrical-shaped dome of charcoal inside the kiln.

After taking them out, you should repeat the same procedure to make charcoal except that logs and dead branches should be laid from the opening.



It pleased me that I did almost the same thing as my parents to make charcoal, even though the quantity was small.

MA-GA-N-KO (TSU-RA-RA) TO-RI (Icicle Taking)

There are many springs of water in my home town and so water from a well was very delicious. In the summer season, we often cooled watermelons in the spring or the well. When I lived in a city later, I could not become used to the city water.

In the frosty winter mornings, there were "MAGANKO" ("TSURARA"), icicles around the rocks where spring water oozed out. We children enjoyed licking them.

There were no refrigerators at that time and ice was a rare thing. In the summer season, there were sherbet in the shops, but it cost money. So we enjoyed icicles even in the winter season, licking or gnawing them.

I have a memory of eating icicles or snow, mixed with sugar.



UMA-NO-RI-GAS-SEN (Horse Riding Battle)



When it was getting cold, we enjoyed the plays which warmed us up. Horse riding battle was one of the popular games in winter. Divide into two teams of the same number. If the total is an odd number, the two leaders play janken and decide which team the smallest child will join. When dividing teams, make pairs of similar ages and bodies, and play janken 2 by 2 to separate the winners and losers. If the following battles result is one-sided, exchange the members.

The leaders play janken to decide which becomes the horse first. Also the members of each team play janken to decide the order of jumping, or the order of making the horse.

When the horse team is ready, the rider team jumps on it one after another. Some boys jump high and ride on violently. The horse team has to endure the whole weight till all the rider team gets on it. If someone in the horse collapses or separates from others because of the weight or shock, the horse team loses. The game starts over again. If someone on the horse falls down accidentally, the horse team wins. When all the rider team gets on the horse, the head member of the horse and the first rider play janken quickly to decide the winner. The winner will be the rider team.

TE-O-SHI-SU-MO (Sumo, Pushing With Palms)

When there is not enough members for a game, this is a good one to kill time.



Stand face to face 50 cm
apart from each other.
At the sign of

**"HAK-KE-YOH-I
NO-KO-TTA"**

"Ready. Go!",

push each other, using
only the palms. If you touch
any part other than the
palms, you lose. Or, if your
foot moves even a bit, you
lose too. You watch the
hands of the opponent
carefully and try to feint the
other.



BATTA (HI-YO-WANA) (Snare For Birds)

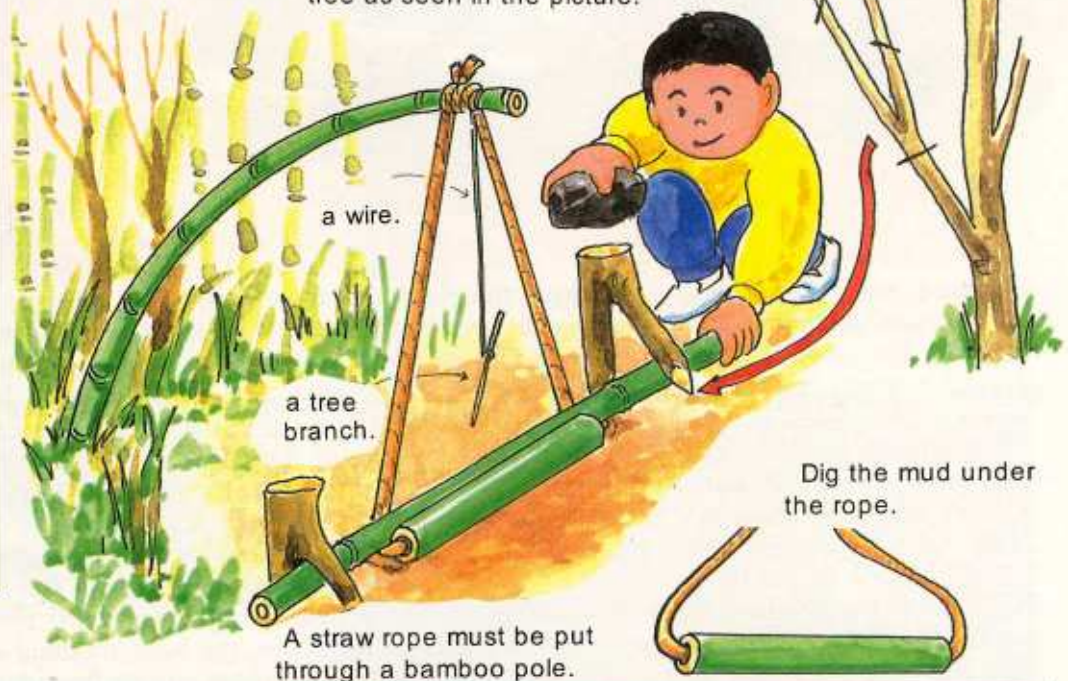
Nowadays, no one tries to snare in this way, but it was a popular way to snare the birds in those days. what about the bird's fate? Of course, I ate them with my friends when I snared them. You might think what pitiful things I did, but they were sweet refreshments at that age. And there were so many birds in the mountains. Now I wonder why there are not so many birds in the mountains compared with old days.

This is a snare for birds-shrikes, bulbuls, pigeons, etc, in the bushes.

Cut 120-130 cm of hard bamboo or oak tree.



Two stakes must be made by cutting branches of a tree as seen in the picture.



A straw rope must be put through a bamboo pole.

Bait, which is the fruit of ripe astringent persimmons, nadins, wax trees, or some bright colored fruit like that, are placed in a cave in front of the snare.

The bamboo pole into which the rope is put through should be hooked on the branch.

Birds which want to eat the bait have to enter the cave via the snare. The cave should be circled by conspicuous branches so that the birds are able to find it easily from the sky.



Arrow marks mean the directions of force.



A bird finds the fruit in the cave and can only come to it by passing through the snare.

It may sit on the bamboo bar. At that moment, the guillotine drops on the neck of the bird.



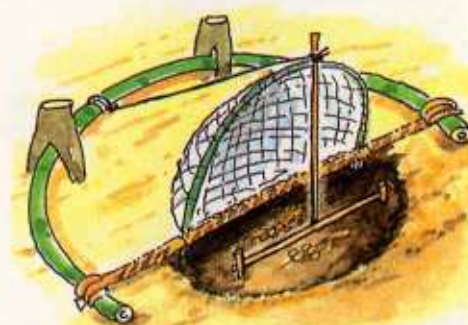
Once a bird had fallen into the snare, the birds were clever enough to know the existence of the snare. I had to change places.



When I went to the snare the next morning, I could see occasionally a bird fallen into it, but I never saw it being snared.

I got three to four birds in a season. I was always excited before going to see whether I had snared something or not.

SU-ZU-ME-WANA (Snare For Sparrows)



This snare utilizes bamboo's elasticity. Place unhulled rice or millet grains near the bar. And you hide yourself in a bush or somewhere and guard the scene.

When sparrows perch on the bar, the longitudinal bar is released by their weight. The net is not strong, so you need to run to the net and catch them immediately before they escape. The capture rate is low.



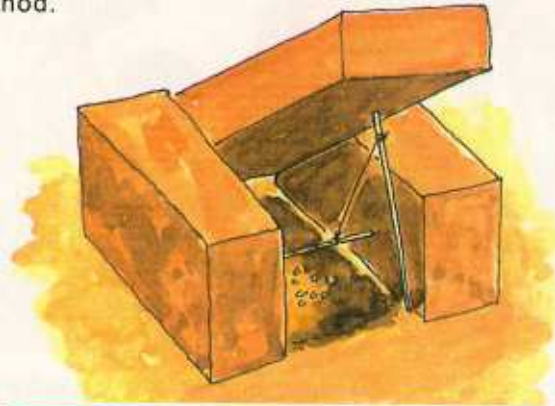
SHOH-KE-TORI (Capturing Sparrows)



When sparrows are eating bait under the cage, pull the rope and you may be able to capture them. But I never succeeded.

RE-N-GA-WANA (Snare By Bricks)

Bricks are utilized for a cage as seen in the picture. I have a memory of a few sparrows captured by that method.



SAKE-ZUKE-GOME-ESA (Bait Of "Sake" Soaked Rice)

Scatter "SAKE" (Japanese alcohol drink) soaked rice, under the brick. The idea was that when sparrow ate the rice they would get drunk and captured easily. However, bird was never captured that way.

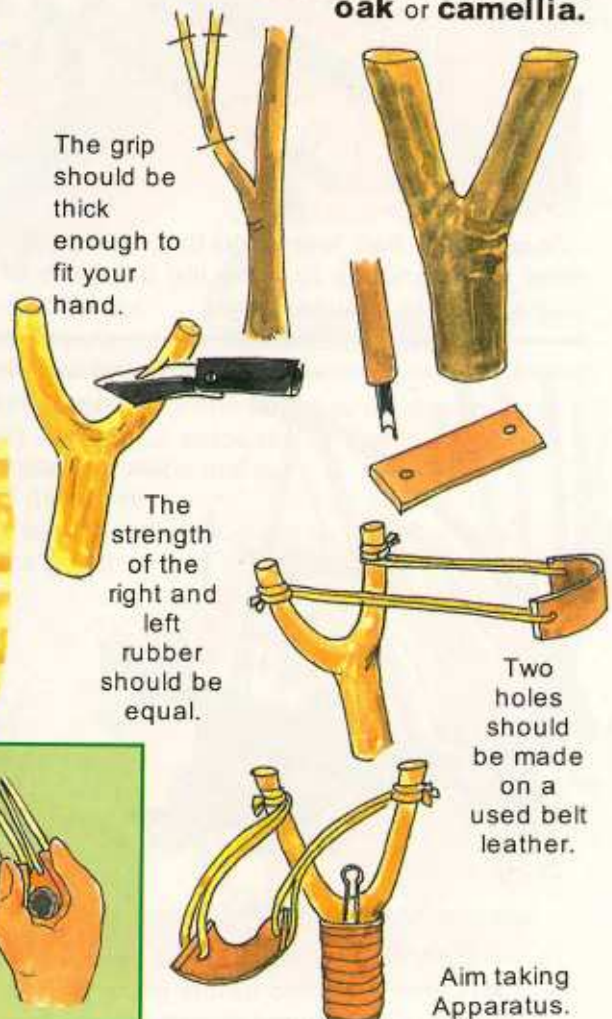
GO-MU-JUH (Rubber Powered Gun)

This gun was the most popular game in the children's world. Almost everybody usually carried it in their pockets or hanging on their belts. When sparrows, bulbuls, shrikes, pigeons or something like that were found on electric wires or branches of trees, they were aimed at by weapons with stones. The bullet seldom hit them, but I

have a memory of experiencing three to four birds in my whole childhood. This game may seem dangerous, but **children on those days had hard and fast rules** about not aiming toward the direction where people were, I have no memory of people who were hit.



Cut the fork of a tree which is hard such as **oak** or **camellia**.



The grip should be thick enough to fit your hand.

The strength of the right and left rubber should be equal.

Two holes should be made on a used belt leather.

Aim taking Apparatus.

The bullets were stones of pin ball size. Your arm should be stretched straight forward the aim point, pull the rubber with the stone, and then release it.



TE-RE-BI (TELEVISION)



"Wow! Riki-Doh-Zan (a famous professional wrestling player) !
Go, Karate chop!"

We children, used to go to a house which had a television set to watch it. There were only one or two homes in the vicinity with one. Of course, we went to the house to watch television when the popular programs of Sumo (Japanese wrestling), Western movies, dramas, or something like that were on the screen, saying to the person who owned it, "Excuse me, but would you kindly allow me to watch the television?" The owner said, "Oh, yes, please do." All at once, many children entered the room and cried, "Wow! Wow!" or something like that. Thinking back, the owner probably thought us to be troublesome.

After one or two years of having one or two television sets in the vicinity, there were a fairly many television sets here by the thirty fifth or thirty sixth year of Showa (in 1960 or 1961). At last my parents bought it in my family when I was in the fourth grade of elementary school. My parents granted my strong request because of my crying every day. The price was so high at that time that it was forty to fifty thousand yen which was approximately six times as high as the wage of a first year business man just entering the average company (seven or eight thousand yen a month was the salary). I felt proud that a television antenna stood on our house roof. Although I promised my parents to study hard even if I had time to watch television, I was absorbed with watching television every night and I used to be scolded by my parents.

Popular programs which I never forget were Eyes of Jaguar, Harimao, Shiroumadohji, Super man, A good dog Rintintin, A gun man with no home, Rawhide, A rifle man, Annie get your gun, Western parade in lone ranger, Bronco Shyan, Brother Cartwright (Bonanza), A circus goes to the west, Popeye, Disneyland Series, A good dog Lassi, Sanbaka Taisho, Gekko Kamen, Maboroshi Tantei, Tetsuwan Atom, Iron Man NO. 28, Eight Man, Yaguruma-Kenno-Suke, Onmitsu Kenshi, Ninjabutai, Gekko, Kyohfunomiira, and at a later age, Combat, Ben Casey, great Refugee, Ultra-Q, Sanbiki no Samurai, etc.

And I was strongly influenced by the heroes who came on the scene, imitated and played them. These were the norm of my life. For instance for relations between my father and me, I imitated Rifle Man, or for justice and bravery, Brother Cartwright was my norm.

YAKI-ISHI-KA-I-RO (Body Warmer Of Warmed Stones)

It was bitterly cold when I went to school on a white frosty morning. My hands, feet, ears, and cheeks, were so cold that they felt freezing like ice. On mornings like that, I often carried YAKI-ISHI-KAIRO, a warmed stone, in my hands and warmed my hands or cheek, which kept me warm for a while. After it became cold, I gave it back to the river.



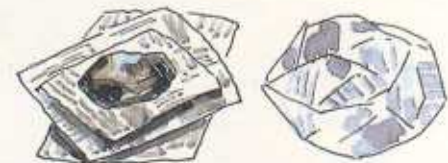
Put a stone of ONIGIRI (boiled rice ball) size into a fire.



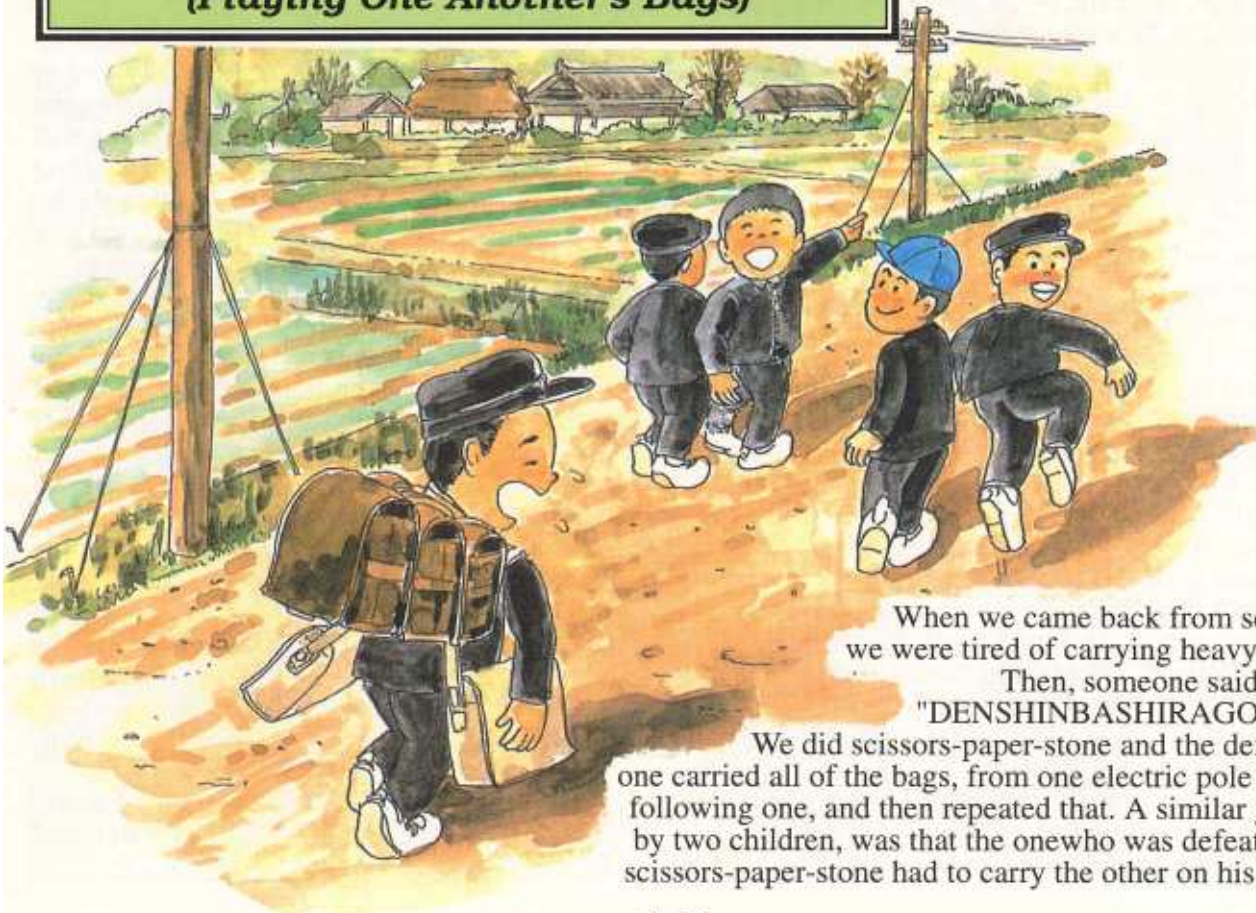
Pull out after a while.



Wrap it in used newspapers double or triple, lest your hands be burned by it.



DEN-SHIN-BASHIRA-GO-SHI (Playing One Another's Bags)



When we came back from school, we were tired of carrying heavy bags.

Then, someone said to do "DENSHINBASHIRAGOSHI".

We did scissors-paper-stone and the defeated one carried all of the bags, from one electric pole to the following one, and then repeated that. A similar game, by two children, was that the onewho was defeated by scissors-paper-stone had to carry the other on his back.

SORI-ASOBI (Play With Sleigh)



It was rather a warm weather in my home town with seldom snow deeper than 20-30 cm, but once we had so much snow that our elementary school was closed. We usually had more snow in winter in those days than today, because the earth may be getting warmer and warmer recently.

One morning when I got up early, fields and mountains around my home were a blanket of white snow. Immediately, I went to the mountain near by to cut and bring bamboo to make a sleigh. As soon as I made it, I went to the slope where small cedars of one or two meters high were planted, or to roads which were **wonderful ski fields**.

Friends who made their sleighs gathered on the slope. The most thrilling place was a long mountain road which had a slope with high sides located just above my home. We sped down from the higher part like a bob sleigh at high speed. It was a splendid scene.

But the snow was melted down by the afternoon and we had to bring the snow from the shady parts or cut bamboo and spread them on the slope.

We usually played on that road even when we did not have snow. Another way to ski was scattering wet leaves or spreading water on it.

However, that road was the one which workers used to go to work. And we, children, were scolded by adults not to play like that. And so that road returned to its normal state.

SORI (Sleigh)

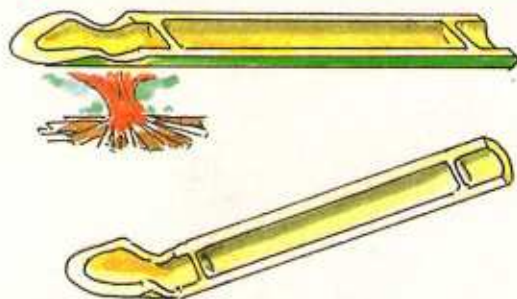
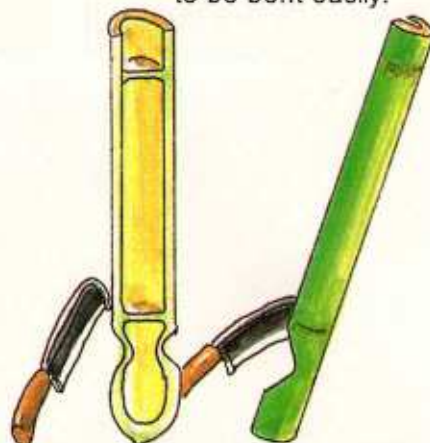
How to make

A thick bamboo



Surfaces of bamboo joint should be flat by shaving with a knife.

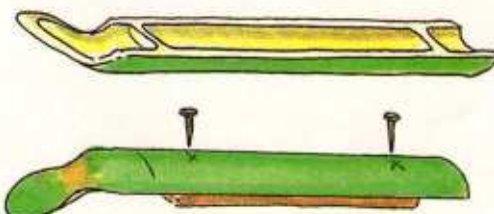
Bamboo parts to be bent should be cut narrow so as to be bent easily.



Put round timber pole inside the bamboo.



Cut the bamboo with cross marks so that the heads of nails driven into the bamboo will be below the surface.

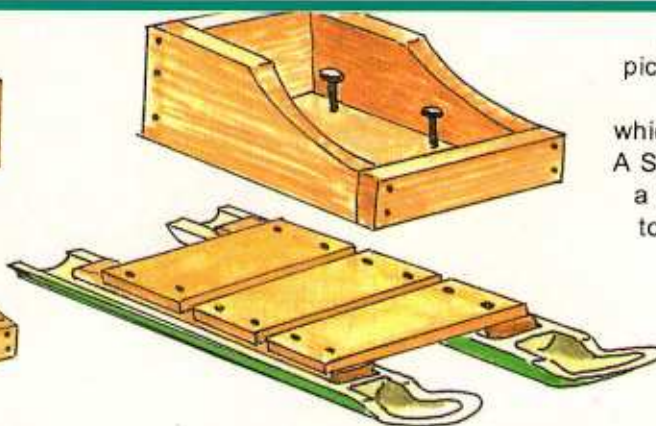


Drive nails into the bamboo and timber poles at the cross marks.

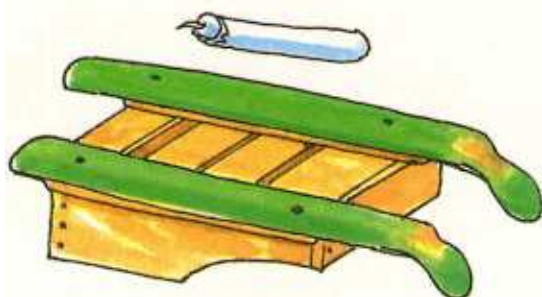


Gradually bend the parts by heating them moderately. When they are put into snow or water still bent, they are fixed in the bent position.

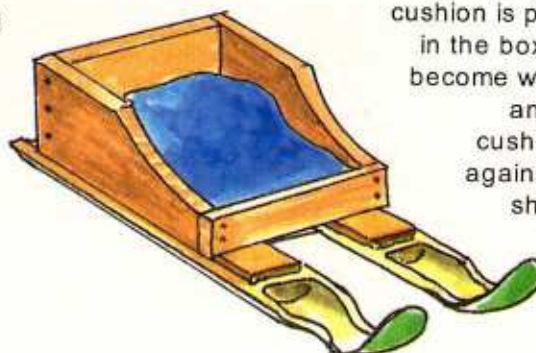
The seat is made of a fish box or newly made with wood.



As seen in the picture, there was also a sleigh, which had no box. A SORI which had a box was better to get stability in sledging.



The surface of the bamboo must be rubbed with a candle which is the substitute for wax.



When a Japanese cushion is placed in the box, you become warmer and are cushioned against the shocks.

NATTO-TSUKU-RI

(Making Of Fermented Soybeans)

In my childhood, I liked NATTO, fermented soybeans, and used to make them.

As mentioned about NATTOTSUKURI at the section of "INASAKU", NATTOTSUKURI, making of fermented soybeans, begins with the coming of winter. I was curious about the reason why **bacteria** of fermented soybeans grows in rice straw and who was the discoverer of the bacteria.

As seen in the picture, card the straw with a comb and make "**NATTO-TSUTO**", the straw packs, in which boiled beans are packed.



The following is how to make them, which is the way my mother did. At first, beans are soaked in water for a day and they are boiled in a pan until the beans become soft enough.



The boiled beans are packed into NATTO-TSUTO, straw pack, with the boiled water.

NATTO-TSUTO are bound tightly by straw ropes.

Two or three NATTO-TSUTO are packed furthermore in other straws, which are bound over again by other ropes.



Boiled water is evenly scattered on the bundles so that the warmth of the boiled water permeates into the center parts of the bundle.



After one week, you should pull out a sample and see the stickiness of it. If it is covered with white bacteria and stickiness is there, all of them are OK.



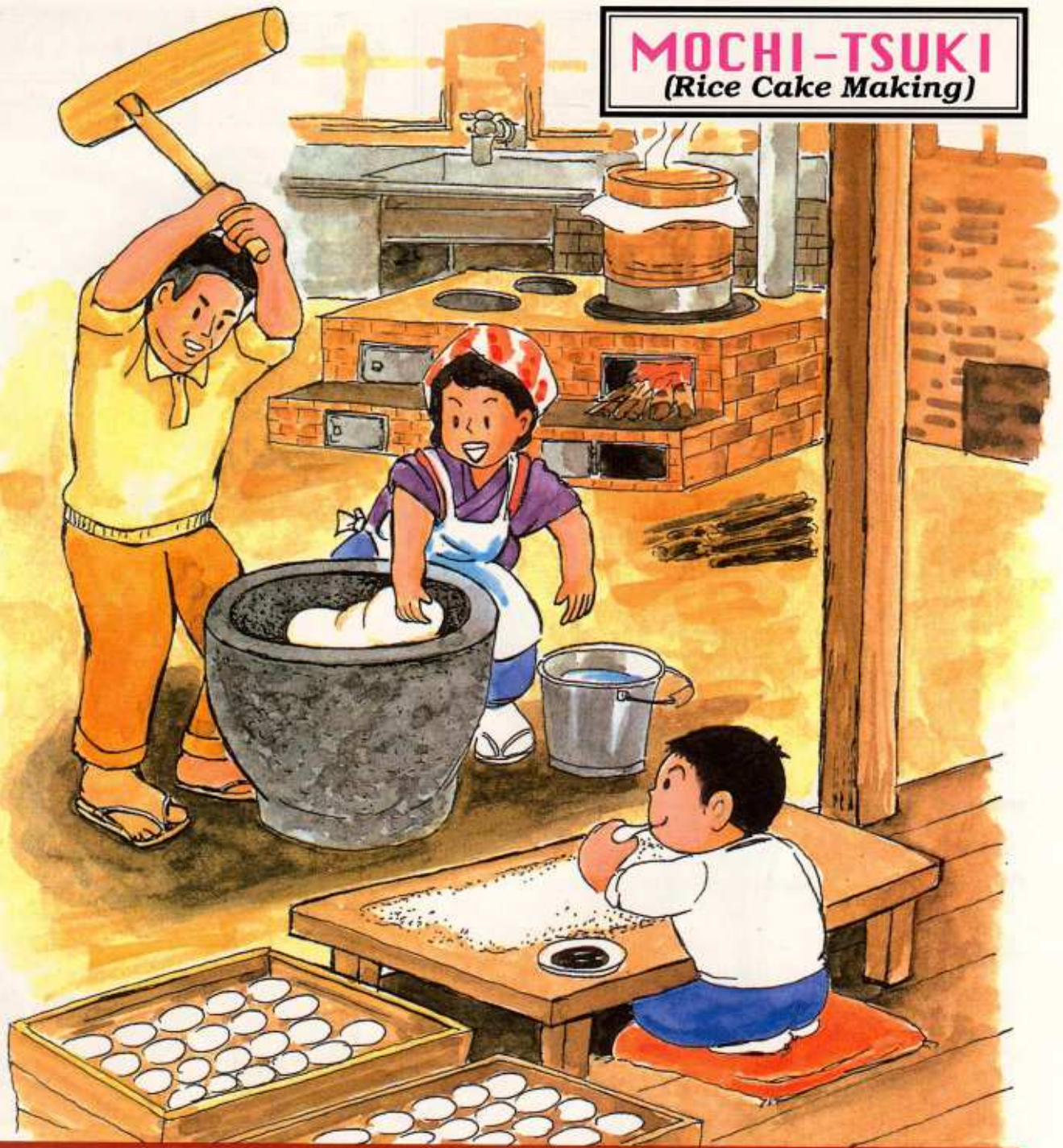
The upstairs shed at home was the place where the bundles were. Each time when we took meals, we usually brought them down from upstairs as necessary.

We served them in a bowl, flavoring with salt or soy (Japanese sauce) and ate them.



NATTO, these home made fermented soybeans, were so sweet. I'll never forget the memory of the sweet.

MOCHI-TSUKI (Rice Cake Making)



Early in the morning of December 30th, the sound **"pet-tang pet-tang!"** woke me up. **Yes, the rice-cake pounding had already started!** The white vapor vigorously steamed up from the cooker on the kitchen range. The first batch had just been started.

Father swung down the pestle with all his might, which made him look more powerful than ever. While he raised the pestle, mother quickly mixed the rice-cake (so as to be pounded evenly). It always made me worried that some day her hand would be severely pounded by the pestle.

One day it did happen. When I was playing nearby, mother yelled, **"Ouch!"** I thought, **"she's got finally hit!"** and rushed to the mortar. The rice-cake mixture was red and my mother looked so pained with one hand covering the other. I clung to my mother and cried hard. After a second my father laughed and mother poked out her tongue. I looked into the rice-cake mixture. It was just the red color-additive. Both my parents had teased me. I hit my parents over and over again, my face still wet with tears.

When the rice-cake mixture was pounded enough and soft, it was taken out to the wooden box which was covered with corn flour. Before the mixture cooled down, it had to be divided into pieces and made round-shaped. Mother squeezed out one after another, all of the same size as if she had measured them.

After one batch was made into round pieces, another batch of steamed rice was put into the mortar, and the pounding started again.

TSU-RU-SHI-BA and SHI-DA-TO-RI (Collecting Of Bush Wood And Fernery)

TSURUSHIBA, a kind of bush wood, and SHIDA, a kind of fernery, are used for the New Year's decorations. When the New Year was getting close, you had to collect them in the mountain. The plants were rare and I had to go to faraway mountains with my friends, taking a lunch box.



SHI-ME-NA-WA (The Decoration Rope)

The bundle was made of rice straw, being knitted after softening by beating with a hammer.



I have a memory of making them a few times, but cannot remember so well. The same for "**KADO-MATSU**", too.

OH-MI-SO-KA (New Year's Eve)

OHMISOKA New Year's Eve, was passing quietly. The New Year would open auspiciously after the usual Japan Broadcasting Station's program, Kohaku-Utagassen (a contest between selected professional male and female singers) was over, children usually had a custom to go to a spring located at our colony and scooped up fresh water to take to their home. We called the act of drawing water from a spring "**Waki-mizu-tori**". I have a memory of hearing that, if we used the water to make the New Year's breakfast of rice cakes boiled with vegetables, we would be happy.

When we finished that, children gathered in front of "Tenjinsama" shrine and talked to each other until New Year's dawn broke, keeping warm by a fire which was previously set up the previous evening. We had a consciousness that we were still in New Year's Eve in spite of

already being actually in the New Year. Elder people who had a job in the cities, Osaka, Tokyo or others, and came back to our home town, took part in the talking and would talk about their experiences in the cities, astonishing us by new stories. We used to idolize the elder ones who were seventeen or eighteen, who wore a suit and spoke standard Japanese (Tokyo accent).

After that we returned back to our home, looking sleepy, and took a nap at home. And then we had the most pleasant day of the year, "**OSHOGATSU**", New Year's day.



CHILDHOOD GRAFFITI

(An English Translated Edition.)

MESSAGES FROM THE PERSONS CONCERNED

This book (Childhood Graffiti) suggests us of desirable surroundings for the children in the 21st century.

A little before Japan became industrialized and urbanized to the present level, most people were engaged in agriculture, fishery, and forestry. The life of the people is quite similar all over Japan. Men and women worked in paddy fields and farmlands not far away from home. Children helped their parents a lot, and still they spent the days playing in company till dusk outside. The life of children was full of various experiences. They tried to make tools or traps to catch fish or birds. They helped their parents to bake charcoals for daily use or to make fermented soy beans, and thus they imitated adults and mastered naturally various techniques of life. They also tried at home some intriguing science experiments taught at school or took all time and efforts to complete the handicraft assignment. Children sometimes compete with each other their bravery by trying a little dangerous play.

The whole family helped each other in carrying out seasonal events and customs, which were thus handed down from generation to generation. Both adults and children joined community activities such as festivals praying for good harvests and thanking for them.

At that time people seemed to have moderate modern life with some use of machines and tools to convenience life and farming, which could be called the 'sustainable richness'. We were able to enjoy such modest life in harmony with nature. This book illustrates many examples of way of life in those days mainly through the description of children's play. Not only in Japan but in all over the world, as urbanization has proceeded, environment where children grow up has gradually deteriorated. In considering such worsening conditions, this book, I am sure, will offer lots of suggestions for the children and adults in the coming century.

Rikuko OKUDA, IPA Japan

In my daily work as a shadow puppeteer in Japan I come into contact with many children. The lack of knowledge and interest in game and playing worries me. A very important side of their heritage is not being passed onto them. That of course is not the only reason. Places to play are fast disappearing, and playmates are usually shut up studying at "cram-schools." If we skip one generation, it will be lost forever, and I don't think any adult has the right to do this.

This is fast becoming an international problem. Maybe people reading the English version of this book will be prompted to think of this problem in relation to their own country, and if they start early enough, maybe they can do better than we have. Good Luck!

Heren Rowena MACGILL

This book reminds me of lots of things. I, as a child, had plenty of time, space, company, choice etc. We had adults who let us play around till dark. We had soil to make mud balls, insects, weeds etc. Nature was so close to us even in an urban area some 30 years ago. It reminds me of the fact that Japan was rich not in money but nature, time, and imagination. I should not beautify the past, but it is worth remembering how much we enjoyed playing, and it is even necessary to see how much we have lost both in environment and in ourselves (mind and heart).

Masuko YAMATAKA

I had been looking forward to have activities to do much for someone who needed assistances since my retiring from a company. When I heard that there was a group to introduce Japanese children's culture to foreign country's children, I took part in the group with pleasure. The playings or games shown in this book are almost the ones which I played in my childhood from 1930s to 1940s and I think that these were played in much older time. Some of them might be in more than one hundred years ago. I think that any adult has a duty to hand our cultural heritage to children. It is wonderful to introduce our Japanese heritage to foreign children. It is my great pleasure if more foreign children will understand Japan through this book.

Hisao TAKAHASHI

In the world, there are many children who do not have the opportunity of studying. There are many children who have to work for their families from dawn till dusk. No play, no fun, no music, no voice to claim their rights. Some children make carpets in the dusty room all day long.

Other children even have to sell themselves in the dark room. No dream, no hope, no future.

This is our world. This is our reality. What should we do for them? Where should we start for them?

I am always asking myself the same questions.

Ikuko UTSUNOMIYA



The International Association for the Child's Right to Play (IPA) is an international non-governmental organization. Membership is open to any individual group or organization which supports the United Nation's Declaration of the Rights of Child, especially Article 7, paragraph 3, which states:

"The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation which should be directed to the same purpose as education; society and the public authorities shall endeavor to promote the enjoyment of right."

As an IPA member, I worry about the present critical situation of children's environment for creative play in nature which is an important heritage handed by children themselves from generation to generation. However, resent global urbanization and commercialized play game introduced by adult in modern society direct children toward the artificial life style decreasing the harmony with nature and the sense of wonder. In order to facilitate children's direct communication and mutual understanding through their creative and cultural activities we wish the people reading this book to understand and join our voluntary activity of IPA Japan to create a human inter-network to introduce each other children's creative games and playing all over the world.

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That's it ! This is only a little part of what I can remember of my childhood. I still have a lot of memories, which is the reason why, after this book, I wrote "FURUSATO KODOMO WISDOM". It hasn't yet been translated into English, and I'm already working on a third book.

By the way, about the translation of "FURUSATO KODOMO GRAFFITI", all my good friends, who read it, and who share the same ideas, told me how wonderful it would be to introduce it to all the children of the world....Here you are !

Unfortunately, my knowledge in foreign languages is absolutely nil, so they - my friends - did the translation from Japanese to English. By having it done that way, as I had to do the rest, I realized that, even though I wrote it first, I really had to know everything in it in order to make it understandable to you; that's why I had so much fun working on the drawings, the captions, and their respective layout.

All the stories in this book took place in the 50's and the 60's (I was born on Sep. 1st, 1950.), in a Japanese countryside of that time. Things had been that way for quite a while. Kids of that time were part of nature and life, had to find some purpose, and act on it on their own. Whether they succeeded or failed, it was their responsibility. That was what made it a lot of fun.

Now, 30 years later, I'm the owner of a small printing company, and everyday, I use that creativity, in a big or small way.

I'm enjoying it all the time ! There is no need to worry, as I got enough work to make a good living, I really think I'm the happiest person of the world ! In these times when rank and fortune seem to be so important, I think that one's happiness is the most treasurable thing one can have.

I do believe that children can achieve that, depending on how they were raised, and whether nature is part of their life. The reason is that nature never lies or cheats, also it can be at times very gentle, or on the contrary very cruel.

I believe that heart abounds when there is an accumulation of emotions. I also think that these emotions should come naturally, and that imagination is necessary. The readymade games kids play with don't allow them to develop their imagination or their intelligence. It's impossible to accomplish that but within the nature God gave us.

I can't wait when I think that this book is going to be read around the world. As a child, when I read "Robinson Crusoe", I was so excited I couldn't sleep, and I tried to do many things as they were written in that story.

The wonderful thing about those times was that we had to do it on our own, developing our hearts and bodies.

If, after reading this book, some children have the feeling they can do something creative, alone or with some friends, then I, as a human being, will be immensely pleased to know that, with such experience, these kids will grow up and pass it on to their own children.

I'm greatly thankful to my friends, and in particular to Yves FERRERO, who supported me, and did their best, understanding that my heart is still as it was 30 years ago.

Finally, my deepest thanks to my wife, MACHIKO, who heartfully supported me in this adventure.

1996.8.1

RYUICHI HARAGA